

TOP STORY: CLINTON'S INSOLVENT FOREIGN POLICY

February 7 - 20, 1994

IN THESE TIMES

the alternative newsmagazine

THE PERSISTENCE OF POVERTY

Thirty years after
LBJ declared a
War on Poverty,
the problem is
as daunting as ever.

Is it a lost cause?

coverage begins
on page 14

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EDITORIAL

FREE MARKET POVERTY

Poverty has been a political issue in American life for 30 years—ever since President Kennedy read a review of Michael Harrington's *Poverty in America* in *The New Yorker* in 1963. That poverty was widespread was news to him, as it was to most of the those involved in governing the country. And, according to Richard Reeves, Kennedy intended to do the right thing—"when the nation was ready for it."

Unlike Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson was familiar with poverty, and as the civil rights movement took root in the mid-'60s, he was determined to do something about it. The result was the "War on Poverty," which promised to put substantial resources into programs to raise the standard of living for low-income Americans, but fell victim to the war in Vietnam, as the Cold War venture devoured more and more human and economic resources.

Harrington's book had been the catalyst, but the civil rights movement of the '60s provided the real impetus for the fight on poverty—just as the labor movement of the '30s had created public awareness of the living conditions and needs of workers. Both were movements for formal democratic rights—the right to organize in the workplace in the first case, the right to vote and to have equal access to public schools and accommodations in the second. But their underlying thrust was for equality not only of formal rights but also of opportunity—and, ultimately, of condition.

Awareness of inequality produced the idea of poverty. In a society where none are rich, or where the rich are thought to be so by divine right, the concept of poverty does not exist. That is why descriptions of poverty begin with Charles Dickens' descriptions of the life of the poor in 19th-

century London. As acquisitive individualism became a way of life, as the free market expropriated communal lands and as those forced off the land and into the cities became visible to the newly rich, a new capitalist culture was created. And poverty was an essential ingredient.

Individual liberty, of course, has always been the hallmark of capitalism. Equality, on the other hand, has been the unifying thread that runs through all the various forms of socialism. In the form that triumphed in 1917 as Communism, liberty was sacrificed to equality. Or so the more humane of the Communists thought. But it didn't take long to see that

without liberty, equality is steadily diminished.

Two hundred years ago, when our country was formed, a rough equality of property owners, unencumbered with the feudal class divisions of Europe, created the most democratic nation in history. But though they expressed their notions of democracy in general, sweeping terms, the Founding Fathers understood the rights of man to be a corollary to property ownership. That's why the struggle for equality in its various forms—abolitionism, the early labor movement, the suffrage movement, the '30s struggles for industrial unions and the civil rights movement—was always associated with socialists of one stripe or another. Yet, one by one, the demands of these movements have been incorporated, at least formally, into our political system.

In the years of the postwar capitalist boom, the American elite felt it could share with the rest at least some of America's economic largesse. Now, however, the years of expansion are long gone and instead of sharing unequally in an ever larger pie, the owners and rulers of our country are scrambling to hold onto their own. That's what Reaganism was all about—and it's one reason why, with labor under attack, investment in inner cities gutted and public education all but abandoned, poverty has been steadily increasing in our country.

This is the case beyond our borders as well. The free market policies of the global market that President Clinton considers the key to American success are creating greater poverty almost everywhere. In the East, economic "shock therapy" has thrown millions into desperate poverty—and has already resulted in rejection of the free marketeers in Poland, Lithuania and Russia. In Mexico, the free market policies associated with NAFTA have increased the misery of the vast majority of the population—thus the rebellion in Chiapas. And the newly signed GATT treaty is expected to put African nations at a further disadvantage with the industrialized world and to plunge them deeper into poverty.

In his State of the Union message, Clinton said that the fundamental goal of his administration is "to compete and win in the global economy." If that remains true, inequality, and therefore poverty, will only increase. ◀

*Pursuit
of global
competitiveness
in an era of
economic
decline can
only increase
world poverty.*

IN THESE TIMES
 "...with liberty and justice for all"

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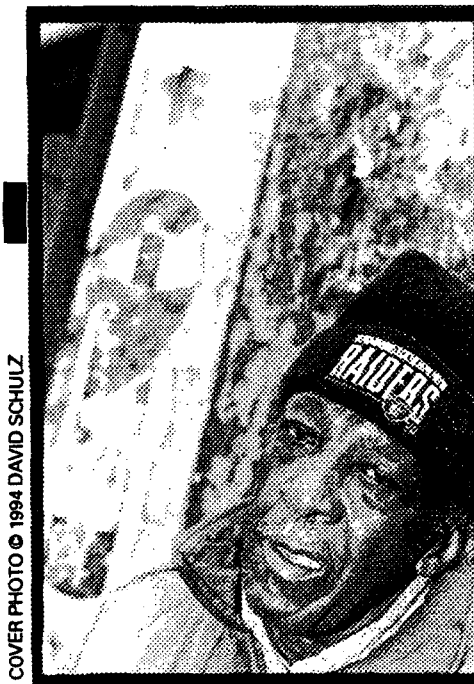
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CONTENTS

Volume 18, Number 6



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SPECIAL ISSUE:

The Persistence of Poverty

Jacqueline Jones on the many faces of the poor	14
Mike Males on the economic generation gap	18
David Moberg on saving the cities	20
Salim Muwakkil on poverty theory	22
Nancy Folbre reviews Peter Peterson's <i>Facing Up</i>	32

FEATURES

First Stone: Back in the Iran-contra saddle again • Joel Bleifuss	12
Clinton's insolvent foreign policy • John B. Judis	26
Viewpoint: Imposing a solution in Bosnia • Kenneth Zapp	28

REVIEWS

Film: <i>In the Name of the Father</i> • Pat Dowell	30
Speed Reading • James Weinstein and David Futrelle	34

DEPARTMENTS

Letters	4	Rough Cuts • J.A. Reid	9
Sylvia • Nicole Hollander	4	In Person • Susan Kimmelman	10
In Short	6	Etc. • Miles Harvey	10
Appall-O-Meter • Woody Igou	6	Huge Mouth • Peter Hannan	13
Media Beat • Pat Aufderheide	8	Classifieds	37

LETTERS

Anything goes

April A. Oliver writes in "China Shop" (*ITT*, Dec. 13) that the United States has decided that trade is its highest and most fundamental interest, above and beyond personal liberty and the individual pursuit of happiness.

Mainland China is the perfect case study of this underlying principle of U.S. foreign policy. The Beijing regime can always count on Washington for support, as long as mainland China is opening up its market and goes the capitalist road.

Wei Jingsheng, mainland China's most prominent political prisoner, who was released last September after 14 years in prison, commented on Bill Clinton's meeting in Seattle with Jiang Zemin, secretary of the Chinese Communist Party: "The Chinese people's understanding of the new direction of U.S. policy toward China leads them to believe that the party was right all these years in saying that the American

government is controlled by rich capitalists. All you have to do is offer them a chance to make money and anything goes. Their conscience never stopped them from making money."

Democrats, Republicans, they are all the same. When it comes to U.S. interests vs. human rights of some little, yellow-skinned, black-haired creatures in mainland China, the White House has already made up its mind. The preference is obvious.

Kin-ming Liu
Hong Kong

Name game

Jonathan Unger, in his otherwise excellent article on developments in China (*ITT*, Nov. 29), implies that the Chinese government calls its policies capitalism "with Chinese characteristics." This might confuse readers who are not familiar with recent Chinese government pronouncements. While Unger might think the policies are cap-

italistic (and, indeed, they might be), the Chinese government does not. The policies are officially called "socialism with Chinese characteristics."

Readers might also want to keep in mind the broader context in which these dramatic reforms are being carried out. The English-language *China Daily* reported on Nov. 25, 1993, that "official statistics show that 250 million rural workers will hit the urban labor market by the end of the century." On Dec. 7, 1993, it noted that "one-third of the country's 440 million rural laborers are actually unemployed. By the end of the century, the number is expected to reach 200 million." Given these staggering statistics, and all that they imply, I hope that *In These Times* will increase its coverage of China in the future.

Edward Vernoff
Shanghai

Low expectations

Michael Klare's "License to kill" (*ITT*, Jan. 10) is yet another sign that this is an age of diminished expectations. Klare concludes his article concerning the transfer of U.S. arms technology to the Third World with the recommendation that such transfers "take full account of long-term U.S. security and economic interests." Klare spent many years in the laudable effort to demonstrate that the Cold War definition of U.S. "security" has been expanded to include almost any exten-

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



sion of U.S. power and that U.S. "economic interests" were a driving force behind such extension.

Why should such "interests" now be deemed an important element of a healthy national and international order? We should be dismantling the military-industrial complex (about which Klare taught us so much) rather than directing it toward a more rational expression of U.S. power.

Progressives won't bring nearer a society in which the local environment remains on a human scale and where aggregate power rests on the entire citizenry (whose sources of enlightenment are not themselves monopolized) by advising those in power how to better manage the system. "Responsible" critics need to pay careful attention to the forces to which they have decided to be responsible.

Jules R. Benjamin
Ithaca, N.Y.

Twerp

Apparently Owen Hatteras was put off by Bob Greene's windy columns (*ITT*, Dec. 27), but Hatteras should consider himself relatively lucky. For real torture, try suffering through a banquet speech from this pompous blowhard, as I had the misfortune to do at the University of Illinois in 1975. The ostensible subject was an inside look at a rock band, but the real topic was how cool Bob Greene was for touring with Alice Cooper and writing a book about it. What an insufferable twerp!

Fenwick Anderson
New Haven, Conn.

Drugs I

I don't use drugs. However, Chris Boys' letter (*ITT*, Dec. 27) was like a breath of fresh air. For the first time I was hearing someone other than myself making the same rational argument for decriminalization of drugs.

Let's face it: drug use will never go away. *Ever*. You could round up all

the drug users tomorrow, execute them, and within a generation or two you'd have the same problem all over again. People like drugs. Always have, always will. Laws aren't going to alter human urges. We might as well outlaw sex.

President Clinton says he could never legalize drugs because his brother almost died from cocaine. How many people who *don't* use drugs die every day, killed as a side-effect of the illegal drug trade (gang shootings, muggings, etc.)? His statement simply flies in the face of reason.

Virtually overnight the legalization of drugs would cause total collapse of the drug cartels and street gangs and put a serious dent into organized crime.

The only drawback I can possibly see is this: what would gangs and dealers do for income? Without drug money, their options would quickly become welfare, legitimate employment, or other crimes (probably mugging, car theft, burglary and the like).

Can anyone picture a former pusher participating in the first two? That leaves option No. 3, and the question arises: is this a fair trade-off? Considering the rivers of innocent blood that run through our streets, I think the answer is all too obvious: it's a risk well worth taking.

Paul T. Grim
Van Nuys, Calif.

Drugs II

On December 7, U.S. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders made history. She said: "I do feel that we would markedly reduce our crime rate if drugs were legalized. But I don't know all the ramifications of this. I do feel we need to do some studies."

Elders is the first sitting executive branch official to make such a commonsense statement. She is the conscience of the Clinton administration. We cannot deal seriously with the crime problem in America until we recognize drug prohibition's role in fueling murder, robbery, burglary and

violence. Dr. Elders has made it possible for Americans to consider this.

The surgeon general's comments have been attacked, ridiculed and called "outrageous" by many public officials. President Clinton rapidly distanced himself from the remarks, saying he did not wish to see any study of legalization or other drug policy options. On the other hand, the American Medical Association supports further research into marijuana.

Continuing the war on drugs means more crime, more violence, more drug-related AIDS cases, more wasted tax dollars and greater loss of our civil liberties.

Two other pieces of news coinciding with the surgeon general's statement:

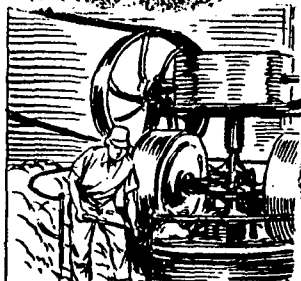
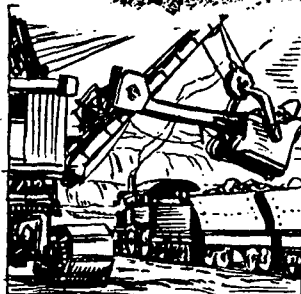
•On November 16, the attorney general of Colombia, Dr. Gustavo de Greiff, said: "The war on drugs is a lost battle. ... The profits are so large that it is a delusion to think that jailing or killing major traffickers will result in [a smaller amount of] drugs in the market. ... In the end, the only solution is legalization, with regulations to control the market." He suggested the issue should be studied while he continued to enforce the drug laws. It seems to me that when the top law enforcement official of the major drug-exporting country joins the top public health official of the major drug-consuming country in calling for a study of legalization, then it is time to sit up and take notice.

•December 5, two days before Elders' statement, was the 60th anniversary of the repeal of Prohibition. The lessons of Prohibition should not be forgotten today. While prohibiting alcohol, a potentially dangerous substance, seemed like a good idea, Americans came to realize that the costs of its criminalization—measured in terms of increased violence, corruption and government expenditures—were too high to continue.

The same problems confront us now with drug prohibition. Join me in urging lawmakers to consider other options to our misguided drug policy.

Andrew Seidenfeld
Jersey City, N.J.

InSHORT



ASBESTOS

is a cottony, fibrous formation of rock that can be fluffed and twined into threads, and woven into cloth. In ancient times it was referred to as the most costly funeral dress of kings. This was because of its "magic" resistance to fire, enabling the cremator to preserve the ashes of the dead. Not used as man's ally in fighting fire and frost and friction and wear where these may threaten. While asbestos deposits are found in many parts of the world, over 50% is mined in Canada from the surface of the ground. Modern search engineers are constantly finding new ways to use asbestos in the home and in industry, ways in which no other known material could survive.



JUSTICE LEFT IN THE DUST

Former manufacturers of asbestos appear to have found a way to contain their future legal liability for injuries and deaths caused by the substance. Asbestos can afflict humans with everything from minor respiratory problems to a deadly form of cancer. In the '30s, the asbestos industry's own medical studies demonstrated these dangers, but manufacturers suppressed the information for more than 40 years. This cover-up caused one of



By Woody Igou

A killer in recycling

Hunter and recycler Larry Aguilar of Santa Ana, Calif., discovered a new craft idea:



he uses spent shotgun shells to make Christmas wreaths.

The colorful collage wreaths consist of 100 shells glued on a piece of wood. Said Aguilar: "They light up a room."

Inscribed: "To Bobby Ray, Merry Christmas. William Safire."

Stiffest upper lips

England has undergone a recent spasm of political correctness. A large supermarket chain changed the name of its "Gingerbread Men" biscuits to "Gingerbread Persons"—



until an uproar forced a reversal. A London school headmistress refused to let

her students see Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, declaring that it was a "blatantly heterosexual" love story. Finally, British plumbers were ordered to stop referring to indiscreet plumbing parts as "ball cocks" and were given suggested alternatives such as "float-operated valves."

There goes Big Ben.

Gha-DA-DA-dafi

Libyan dictator Moammar Ghadafi is about to publish his first collection of short



stories, according to the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. The collection will contain the

hallucinatory title: "The Village ... The Village, The Land is the Land and The Astronaut Commits Suicide."

... and this is your brain on ego.

Nuclear Barney

In an effort to break down the Japanese people's resistance to the importation of



30 tons of plutonium, Japan's nuclear power industry started a cartoon campaign called

"The Story of Plutonium: That Dependable Fellow, Mr. Pluto." *The New York Times* reports that Mr. Pluto is a rosy-cheeked, round-faced character who tells readers, "If everyone treats me with a peaceful and warm heart, I'll never be scary and dangerous!" Mr. Pluto also has a cartoon youngster drink a glass of plutonium-laced water to show that the element passes through the body, an assertion that is dangerously untrue. *Pinch me, I'm dreaming.*

Stunned by a stupid statement? Nauseated by a noxious news item? Livid about a ludicrous lie? Contact the Appall-O-Meter, In These Times, 2040 N. Milwaukee, Chicago, IL 60647.

APPALL-O-METER SCALE

1. Vapid Cultural Zephyrs
2. E Channel Stupid
3. Unauthorized Biography Zone
4. Republican Convention Rerun
5. Bob Dole Splenic
6. Mega-Dittos from Hell
7. NRA Heart and Brains
8. Pyongyang on my mind
9. Disavowed by Bosnian Serbs



the most tragic public-health disasters in U.S. history. It was industrial genocide: many millions of unsuspecting American workers were exposed to dangerously high levels of asbestos dust. Tens of thousands have died. Hundreds of thousands have developed incurable asbestos-related diseases—or will develop them in the future.

It's these future cases that the industry is so worried about. Since the first asbestos lawsuit was filed in 1967, asbestos litigation has cost U.S. companies \$7 billion, according to one estimate, and has forced many manufacturers into bankruptcy. But because people who were exposed to asbestos may not develop a disease for years, there are as many as 27 million potential victims.

In an effort to contain lawsuits from these cases, the Center for Claims Resolution—an organization formed by 20 companies that once made asbestos products—reached a quiet agreement last year with law firms representing asbestos victims. If approved by a U.S. District Court judge, the plan—which sets a total cap of \$1.2 billion on industry pay-outs—will resolve all asbestos suits filed against the companies into the indefinite future. The judge, Charles R. Weiner, will hold a hearing on the case on February 22 in Philadelphia.

But critics charge that Weiner—who, in an unusual legal arrangement, has been put in charge of all the asbestos cases in the federal court system—is rushing the settlement through. "It's as if every legal rule in the book has been turned upside down and no one has been allowed an opportunity to ask for details," one lawyer told the *Philadelphia Enquirer*.

The National Asbestos Victims Legal Action Committee, an umbrella group opposing the settlement, claims that the settlement is unfair and lets asbestos manufacturers off too easily. The settlement would take future asbestos cases out of the courts and resolve them by private panels. Under the settlement, victims will get about \$10,000 each—far less, critics argue, than they would have received through individual lawsuits.

Worse, say the critics, the settlement presents a Catch-22 for those who have not yet developed an asbestos-related disease. Individuals who wanted to opt out of the settlement—and thus preserve their right to pursue their claims in court—would have had to notify Weiner's court by January 24. But it's "impossible to intelligently opt out of a class [of plaintiffs] if you don't know if you're a member of that class," lawyer Brian Koukoutchos, who opposes the settlement, told the *Enquirer*.

Critics also worry that the settlement will set a dangerous legal precedent for other companies involved in massive product-liability disputes. Though the AFL-CIO has endorsed the settlement, many prominent unionists have come out in opposition. "The settlement is not in the interests of union members or any other asbestos victims," says Gale Van Hoy, head of the Texas State Building and Construction Trades Council. "It serves only the interests of negligent corporations."

Adds consumer advocate Ralph Nader: "This settlement stands the class-action lawsuit on its head. What used to be a tool for stopping corporate abuse is now a means of protecting corporate assets."

—Miles Harvey

AN END TO APATHY?

A new poll shows that college students are increasingly inclined to identify themselves as being on the political left or right, rather than in the middle. The survey of a quarter-million college freshman was conducted by the UCLA Higher Education Research Institute. It found that the number of students identifying themselves as on the left rose to 27.2 percent, the highest percentage since 1976, while the number on the right rose to 22.6 percent, the highest rate for that category since the survey began in 1970. Meanwhile, those identifying themselves in "the middle" dropped 3 percent from last year to 49.9 percent—the lowest since 1972.

—John B. Judis

SYRIA'S RAPPROCHEMENT

The expansion of U.S. influence in the post-Gulf War Mideast has left little room for nations in the region to resist Washington's strategic concerns. This new reality is central to Syrian President Hafez al-Assad's recent offer to normalize relations with Israel in return for Israeli withdrawal from Syrian territory.

In his January summit conference with President Clinton in Geneva, the Syrian leader spoke in optimistic terms about the future of U.S.-Syrian relations. Whether such a hopeful view is justified remains to be seen.

Until 1991, Washington perceived Syria to be a hard-line pro-Soviet state, a stubborn opponent of Israel and an active sponsor of terrorism. But the collapse of the Soviet Union and the onset of the Gulf War—in which Syria cooperated with the West—seemed to portend a new relationship between Damascus and Washington. Syria is now forced to walk a thin line between accommodating American demands and maintaining its nationalist credentials within a highly politicized society that would likely resist too many concessions to the United States or Israel.

The primary issue between Syria and Israel is of course the Golan Heights, captured by the Israelis during the 1967 Six Day War. For its part, Israel wants a guarantee of full diplomatic and economic relations with Syria *before* the two nations discuss the fate of the Golan Heights. But the "land for peace" formula of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 stipulates only that Israeli withdrawal be accompanied by security guarantees, something that Syria has long accepted. There is nothing in any U.N. Security Council resolution that calls for the establishment of full normal relations. Though an Israeli desire for normal relations with its neighbor is quite understandable, Syria has no legal obligation in this regard.

Despite the legal weakness of the Israeli position, Washington has been taking a "middle ground" in the Israeli-Syrian talks. There's an irony in this: for years, Washington considered Syria too intransigent for its rejection of resolutions 242 and 338; more recently the United States has considered Damascus to be too hard-lined for its insistence on their strict implementation.

Still, Syria is convinced that the only route to good relations with the United States is to resolve its conflict with Israel. Since the Gulf War, there has been some improvement in U.S.-Syrian relations. For example, the United States has increased cultural exchanges and largely ceased its public condemnations of Syria. Private U.S. investment has also increased. But Syria wants

MEDIA BEAT

By Pat Aufderheide

Rude, crude, offensive

We have seen the future, and it is Howard Stern.

The pay-per-view TV market—in which spectacular events are shown exclusively to those viewers who pay for them in advance—is a testing ground for the potential profitability of more advanced interactive communication technologies. But no pay-per-view programming had been making money except for the hottest of boxing matches and rock concerts.

And then came *The Miss Howard Stern New Year's Eve Pageant*. The show—a beauty contest in which bikini-clad women gave raunchy, lewd performances before a panel of judges that included John Wayne Bobbitt and a Ku Klux Klan leader—did great business. It made more money even than pay-per-view concerts of the Rolling Stones in 1989 or New Kids on the Block in 1990, previous record holders. Even so, one of the executives involved in selling the program—which the *New York Post* called "the most disgusting two hours in the history of TV"—wasn't completely thrilled. "It's schlock programming that is rude, crude and offensive," he told *Broadcasting* magazine.

Its own reward

Dan Rather is discovering the cost of honesty. Following a speech to his professional association last fall, in which he indicted ratings-happy TV news, the *CBS Evening News* has increased its quota of hard news stories, focusing on Washington and interna-

tional affairs. But, says *The Tyndall Report*—that impressive newsletter analyzing TV news programming—Rather's ratings have fallen 4 percent.

Because that's where the money is
If you're waiting for a small, sensitive, culturally and regionally specific movie, don't hold your breath hoping Hollywood will make it. In 1993, reports *Variety*, major Hollywood studios made more money overseas than at home in a generally banner year. And of course, when a movie travels, celebrity status and violent action travel fastest. While Europeans puzzle over how to control the flood of U.S. films into their cultures, industry players are targeting other markets: Mexico, Taiwan, South Korea, Indonesia and India.

Lingua franca
Eighty percent of teenagers talk to their friends about commercials they've seen, according to *Advertising Age*. Apparently teens rate the commercials, using criteria drawn from the medium. As one polled youngster put it: "Bad commercials are the ones that are dumb or suck."

Start your own
The *Quayle Quarterly*, which documented the misadventures of our former vice president, is now defunct—but its progeny live on in desktop publishing land, reports *Columbia Journalism Review*. Among the legatees: the *Perot Periodical*, the *Clinton Chronicle*, the *Hillary Clinton Quarterly*, the *Stephanopoulos Quarterly* and the *Flush Rush [Limbaugh] Quarterly*.

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more from Washington—in particular, removal from the U.S. list of states sponsoring terrorism. Being dropped from this list would offer Syria a variety of benefits, including access to technology. Syrian officials view the delay as political, since the United States has not tied Syria directly to an act of terrorism since 1986.

The Assad regime remains undeniably authoritarian, but there has been some noticeable liberalization on the economic and political fronts. Nonetheless, the State Department has ruled out gradual improvement of relations with Syria in response to progress in areas such as human rights, drug enforcement and arms control. Washington insists that all these issues be fully resolved before closer relations are possible.

Some U.S. officials justify this "all-or-nothing" position by pointing to past U.S. policy toward Iraq. The officials note that up to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. government had been rewarding Saddam Hussein's government for its partial reforms. But critics say that Syria's movement on the contested issues is far more substantive than was Iraq's. Furthermore, they argue, the ill-fated U.S. warming to Baghdad had been based not on Iraq's internal reforms but on overriding strategic concerns.

In addition, the Syrians are not oblivious to the hypocrisy of such preconditions, noting that the United States has not hesitated to have close relations with other heavily armed regimes with poor human rights records, ties to the drug trade and links to terrorists.

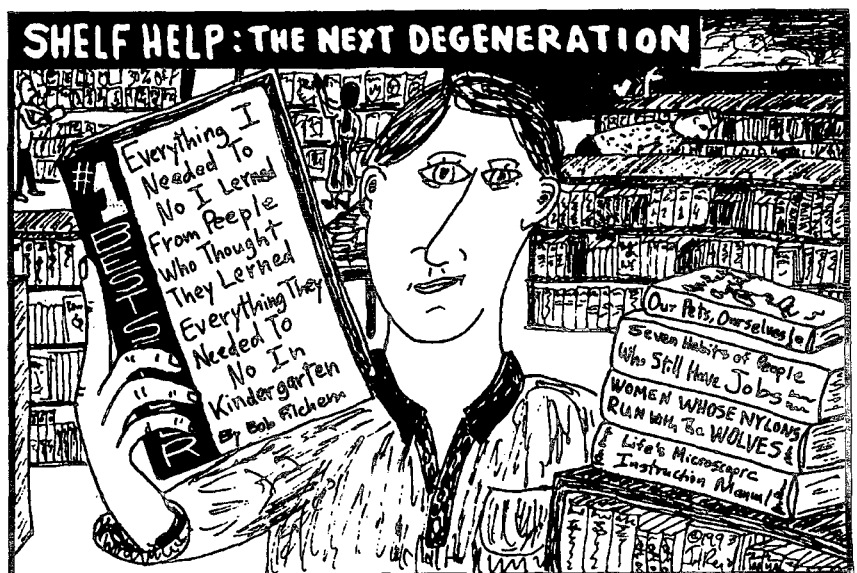
The Clinton administration points to strong opposition to improved relations with Syria in Congress. But some observers claim that the administration would have little trouble mollifying congressional critics if they were willing to forcefully make their case for closer ties with Syria.

In the meantime, Assad is coming under increasing internal pressure from both radical Islamic sectors and hard-line secular nationalists. The longer the Mideast peace talks drag on without a comprehensive settlement and the longer U.S. hostility to Syria remains, the less likely it becomes that Assad will be able to bear the costs of conciliation with the West.

—Stephen Zunes

ROUGH CUTS

By JA Reid



I N P E R S O N

STREETWISE POLITICS

Jerry Washington builds a new kind of movement

daily life is filled with the details of politics—who was seen with whom, and where and when, and what does it mean.

In repose there is something heavy and somber about his expression, but Washington, blessed with more than an ordinary amount of mortal energy, has not spent much time sitting still. He put himself through college by working a variety of jobs, including cleaning toilets and buses for Greyhound. He became an insurance salesman, and entered political life as a young Republican.

Washington has since moved across the political spectrum and today, at 54, works as a consultant and strategist with the Chicago-based 21st Century VOTE (Voices of Total Empowerment). Barely a year old, the organization sees its mission as addressing the desperate need in the African-American community for political education and grass-roots political action. The organization, which fields 200 deputy registrars to sign people up to vote, has so far successfully elected nine candidates in Chicago's most recent local school council elections. The group has shaken the powers that be, black and white, with its ability to mobilize African-American youth, many of them gang members, by the thousands. (See *In These Times*, Oct. 18 and Nov. 15, 1993.)

Washington credits 21st Century VOTE's startling success, as shown by a 10,000-strong demonstration in Chicago last September, to the fact that the group "has the community at heart," especially the young African-American men who have been written off by society and consigned to early and violent death. "No one has reached back to help these kids out," says Washington. "No one was listening, no one was doing anything for these young folks. You've got to deal with the educational system, with jobs and job training. People have got to live some kind of way."

According to Washington, what the black and white political establishments both find worrisome is that they "can't get to" what makes 21st Century VOTE work. "Religious leaders, political and business leaders can't influence us," he says.

The Chicago press frequently notes, and with some frustration, that Washington "deflects" questions about the gang affiliations of 21st Century VOTE's rank and file. In fact, he is rather candid, with the oblique candor one expects of a politician. Washington acknowledges that gang members are part of 21st Century VOTE: "You can't turn a person away. They're citizens, like you and me."

And some gang members are spending at least some of their time in evening citizenship and political action classes run by 21st Century VOTE. They also help staff the group's many voter-registration drives. "I don't know what they

Jerry Washington is consumed by a passion to improve the life of his community, particularly the quality of public education and the availability of jobs and job training. But while his passion is necessarily expressed in generalities, his

ETC.

By Miles Harvey

A better choice

The Supreme Court's recent ruling that anti-abortion demonstrators can be sued under federal racketeering statutes is of course a huge boost for the pro-choice movement. But the movement is making significant strides to help itself out as well.

Last month the National Abortion Rights Action League changed its name and its focus. The group is keeping its well-known acronym, NARAL, but is now officially called the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League. In addition, the group is adopting a broader agenda that promotes sexual education, better contraceptive methods, access to prenatal care and infant health.

"America must change course," NARAL President Kate Michelman argues. "Instead of doing battle over the right to choose, we must strive to make abortion less necessary. Our nation's focus should not be on abortion, but on giving people the information and tools they need to make informed choices about their lives and their families."

NARAL's change in agenda is long overdue. Many Americans who have grave misgivings about abortion are nonetheless adamant supporters of birth control and sex education. As long as the pro-choice movement focused strictly on abortion, it was alienating this huge group of potential allies. Thus, all through the '80s, the anti-abortion movement was able to frame the terms of the debate: abortion—is it good or bad?

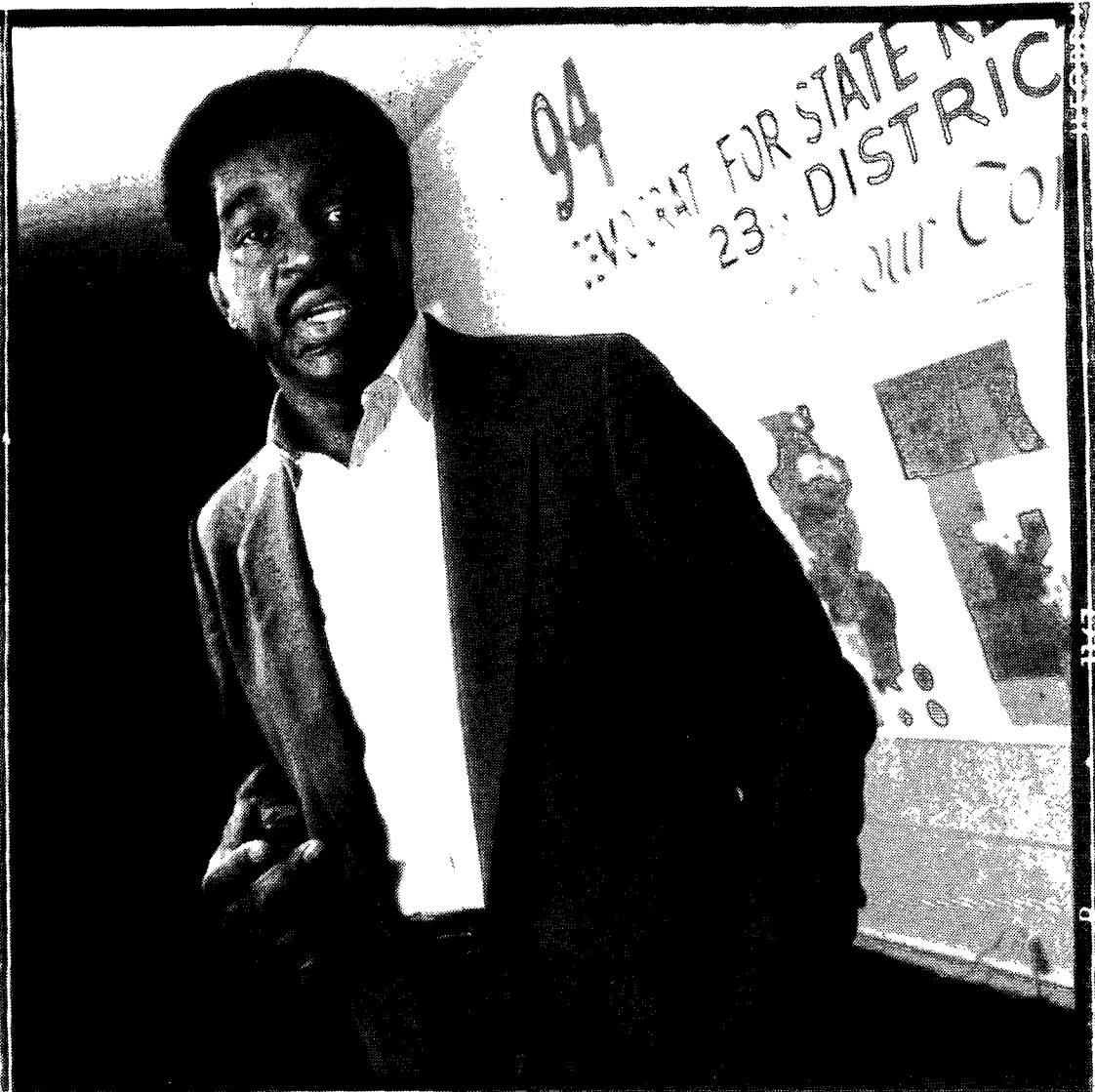
But now NARAL is developing

what Michelman calls "a comprehensive, integrated approach to reproductive health." Citing figures that show there are 3 million unintended pregnancies in America each year, she says that NARAL plans "to lead the way in making abortion less necessary." "America has far too many teenagers giving birth, far too many women facing crisis pregnancies and far too many children born unwanted," she asserts.

It's hard to argue when the debate is framed like that. Ironically, now that pro-choice forces are finally getting some political smarts, their opponents seem to be falling apart. The Operation Rescue-style clinic protests have become increasingly violent

in recent years, undercutting the movement's "pro-life" moral posturing and alienating many would-be supporters. But even in the wake of the Supreme Court ruling, Joseph M. Scheidler, leader of the Pro Life Action League, is vowing to stay the course. "We're not going to pull back," he says. "We're going to keep fighting this holocaust and someday we'll get our senses back."

Michelman, meanwhile, says that, in addition to its new agenda, NARAL will continue to fight for abortion rights. "Abortion is still not accessible, especially for poor, rural and young women," she says.



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might be doing on the corner," says Washington, "but if we can keep them off the corner for even one second, at least that's a second that somebody won't have a problem."

The mainstream press has been highly skeptical of these efforts, and of the various declarations of gang truces. But Washington and his colleagues cannot afford cynicism. Hope is the fuel of their life's work. "We're reaching out to these kids, giving them a home that's going to help them change their minds and their attitudes about life. We're not just going to march, we're actively going to work on jobs, on education, on strengthening the family structure. We're talking about not just formal education, but education as it relates to the things you have to do as a family, as a mother or a father."

Washington is an elected member of the school council for a local high school, and from 1984 to 1986 he sat in the Illinois General Assembly as a state representative. Since that initial foray into state politics, he's run in every election, determined to get back to the state capital. Washington is hopeful that this time, with 21st Century VOTE behind him, his election will again be possible.

When asked whether he thinks he could really accomplish anything if elected as a state representative, Washington replies, "At least I can tell the truth."

—Susan Kimmelman

THE FIRST STONE

IRAN-CONTRA
DICTION

By Joel Bleifuss

Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh's final report on the Iran-contra scandal has been greeted by a fair amount of journalistic cud-chewing about why the public has become so bored with the subject.

In a January 19 *New York Times* "news analysis," for example, David Rosenbaum wonders why the constitutional issues raised by Iran-contra "were basically lost on the American public."

But contrary to conventional wisdom, the public did care. In September 1992, the special prosecutor's office made public a memo by former Secretary of State George Shultz that demonstrated that President Bush had lied about Iran-contra. A *New York Times* poll taken a few days later revealed that 55 percent of the voting public thought that President Bush was hiding things the public needed to know about Iran-contra.

If there was a problem with public apathy, it was not because people were bored with Iran-contra, but because they had become cynically resigned to government corruption. Iran-contra was one in a string of scandals that included the October Surprise, the EPA Superfund scandal, Debategate, the HUD scandal, the S&L heist, the Inslaw case, BCCI and Iraqgate. During the Reagan-Bush era a record number of administration officials were forced from office. Voters rightly perceived that their elected officials were serving somebody's interest—and it wasn't theirs.

Members of the national media, through their unerring efforts to cover the style of politics but not its substance, bear some responsibility for this demise of the nation's civic life. These graduates from the "Maureen Dowd School of Journalism" may have muttered snide comments in private, but as members of the working press they spent the Reagan-Bush era cowering before the great and powerful presidency—paying no attention to what was going on behind the curtain.

For example, Oliver North could not have become an overnight sensation without an acquiescent news industry willing to shine the spotlight on him. His subsequent celebri-

ty overshadowed both the criminal charges and efforts by responsible reporters to dig below the surface. North became the drum major in an Iran-contra parade nobody was willing to rain on, or rein in.

In part, the Washington press corps downplayed Iran-contra and other White House scams because to do otherwise would have thrown doubt on the good times being had by all—or at least by everyone they knew.

Thanks to a combination of deficit spending and tax breaks for the rich, from 1977 to 1988 the wealthiest 20 percent of U.S. households saw after-tax income rise by 34 percent, adjusted for inflation. Those who were cashing in on this intergenerational Ponzi scheme didn't want it interrupted. Reagan and Bush did

their part, repeatedly exhorting the nation to ignore the "naysayers." And the talking heads and interminable experts that define the national agenda went along.

With a few notable exceptions, the national media let itself get snookered by Reagan and Bush. But with Walsh's report, the full extent of the administration's Iran-contra wrongdoing is now part of the historical record. No wonder members of the nation's mediocracy are attempting to blame an apathetic public for turning its attention from a scandal the mainstream media itself has never bothered to understand—and thus can now not explain.

I asked John Canham-Clyne and Jim Naureckas, both of whom have covered Iran-contra for *In These Times*, for their thoughts on how the press dealt with the independent counsel report. Both singled out the above-mentioned David Rosenbaum article as an egregious example of high-profile ignorance.

The only person Rosenbaum apparently interviewed for his front-page article, "A Scandal That Fell Flat," was former Sen. Warren Rudman (R-NH), the Republican head of the Senate's lackluster Iran-contra investigation. Rosenbaum writes that Walsh "added nothing but small details to what was already known." He later explains, apparently getting this misinformation from Rudman, that "the report of the congressional investigation, which was published in November 1987, contained all the essential elements in Mr. Walsh's report." Then as now, writes Rosenbaum, "no one seemed to care much."

According to Rosenbaum, Walsh "re-emphasized these points: U. S. policy in Iran and Nicaragua was all but turned over to and carried out by a secret band of shady arms dealers and private operatives. ... The small number of people in the government who knew about these policies misled Congress and lied to other top officials. ... Ronald Reagan, who maintains that he paid little attention to these offenses at the time, neglected his constitutional duty to insure that the laws are faithfully executed." Rosenbaum has it all wrong.

He apparently didn't read the Walsh report, which makes clear that the Constitution was violated not by a "small band of shady arms dealers and private operatives," but by a large group of administration officials that included President Reagan.

On page 563 of his report, Walsh wrote: "The investigation and the prosecutions arising out of it have provided a much more accurate picture of how two secret administration policies—keeping the contras alive 'body and soul' during the Boland cut-off period and seeking the release of Americans held hostage by selling arms to Iran—veered off into criminality. Evidence obtained by the independent counsel establishes that the Iran-contra affair was not an aberrational scheme carried out by a 'cabal of zealots' on the National Security Council staff, as the congressional select committees concluded in their majority report. Instead, it was the product of two foreign policy directives by President Reagan which skirted the law and which were executed by the National Security Council staff. ... The evidence establishes that the central National Security Council operatives kept their superiors—including Reagan, Bush, Shultz, Weinberger and other high officials—informed of their efforts generally, if not in detail, and their superiors either condoned or turned a blind eye to them. ... Fundamentally the Iran-contra affair was the first known criminal assault on the post-Watergate rules governing the activities of national security officials. Reagan administration officials rendered these rules ineffective by creating private operations, supported with privately generated funds that successfully evaded executive and legislative oversight and control. Congress was defrauded."

Robert Parry, then with *Newsweek*, was the first journalist to expose the domestic propaganda operation through which the Reagan-Bush White House sought to mold public opinion and control the press. (Co-authored by Peter Kornbluh, this exposé, "Iran-Contra's Untold Story," appeared in the fall 1988 issue of *Foreign Policy*.) Parry was also among the first to expose the secret North network.

"It is truly remarkable that so many seemingly respectable officials would take part in what seems to be an obstruction of justice," Parry told me. "But this was an administration that thought they could twist reality into anything they wanted it to be. They had had such success at manipulating information and getting away with it, that they thought they could get away with it forever. And by delaying the investi-

gation and attacking Walsh, they did get away with it."

Parry is critical of Walsh for the narrow scope of his investigation. Yet he says, "One can't really fault him, considering what his task was and how difficult it was made by Congress and the Washington press corps that was constantly attacking him." Parry wishes Walsh had delved into "the larger context." For example, says Parry, "What did the U.S. government know of the contra drug trafficking?"

Parry is intrigued by references in Walsh's report to a Sept. 19, 1986, meeting North attended with officials from the Pentagon, the State Department and the CIA. Walsh writes: "North raised a new, dramatic proposition. Manuel Noriega, dictator of Panama, had offered to have sabotage conducted inside Nicaragua for \$1 million in cash." According to notes of the meeting, North said Noriega would have used the \$1 million in cash to hire British mercenaries to blow up electrical pylons in Nicaragua.

North's proposal was apparently overruled. Yet it raises questions about other dealings North may have had with Noriega, who at the time was known to be working with Colombian drug traffickers. How much did North know about Noriega's drug involvement? When did he know it? Those questions should perhaps be put to candidate North this fall as he tries to scam the voters and capture a U.S. Senate seat. Yes, Virginia, North is a patriot. ▲

THE ADVENTURES OF A HUGE MOUTH

by Peter Hannan



THE PERSISTENCE OF POVERTY

American others

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*A focus on
the urban
"underclass"
diverts
attention
from the real
sources of
poverty.*

By Jacqueline Jones

Michael Harrington's book *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* was published 32 years ago. Today, it is scarcely possible to even mention the book without conjuring up the platitudes that invariably go with it. *The Other America*, it is said, "stirred the conscience of a nation" and "inspired policy-makers at the highest echelons of government to initiate the War on Poverty."

In fact, the legacy of this study is much more complicated than such rhetorical accolades would suggest. In many ways the debate over poverty has moved backwards since then. Contem-

porary poverty "experts" seem to have retained only the most regressive aspects of Harrington's book—such as his reliance on the notion of a "culture of poverty," an ideological construct that, over the years, has given license to politicians and bureaucrats who have launched a mean-spirited attack on the way poor people live their lives.

Since the publication of *The Other America*, academicians, policy-makers and "mainstream" Americans have forgotten what in many ways was the most important aspect of the book: Harrington's relatively expansive view of poverty. Harrington provided a compelling picture of the many faces of poverty around the country—older, displaced autoworkers in Detroit; ill-paid service workers in an Atlanta hospital; elderly men and women in Ohio unable to negotiate a maze of Social Security red tape; the malnourished children of Appalachian farmers; unemployed men clustered on a

Harlem street corner; alcoholics and drug addicts shivering in doorways in small towns and big cities.

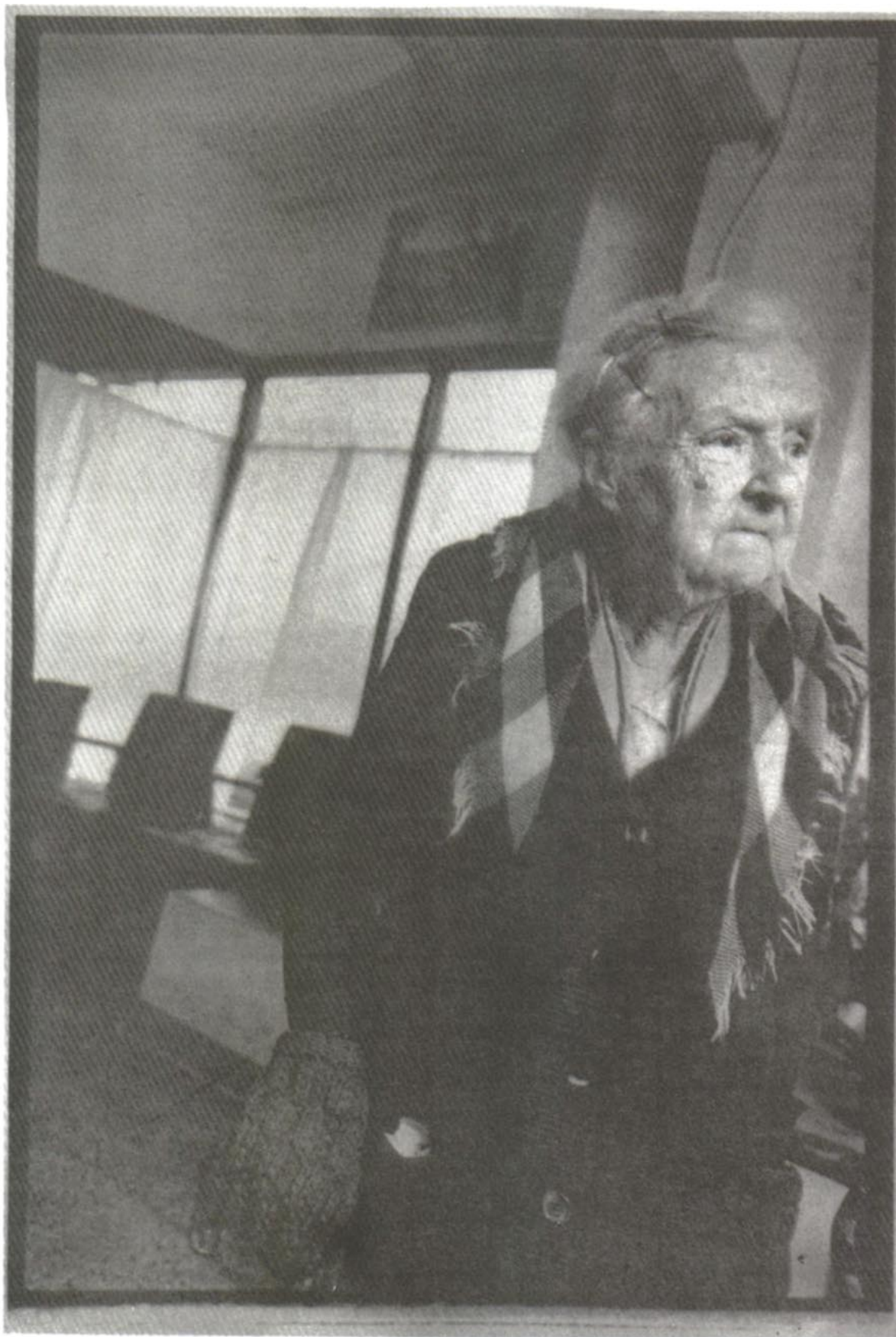
Today's poverty experts have turned away from this comprehensive vision of poverty, and have instead focused with a vengeance on one specific manifestation of the problem—the Northern black ghetto. Queried about the best books on poverty, most contemporary experts will list works dealing with the "underclass"—poor people who are by definition confined to the inner city, and who are by implication African-American.

Poverty statistics today show that residents of the Northern black ghetto represent but a subset of the total population of impoverished Americans. Indeed, the highest rates of black poverty can be found outside the ghetto. Data provided by the Current Population Report on Poverty in the United States, issued by the Department of Commerce in 1992, show that the white poor (23.7 million) outnumber the black poor (10.2 million) by two to one. Even in the inner city, the total number of whites below the poverty line (8.3 million) is more than the number of poor blacks (6.1 million). The black poverty rate is, of course, proportionately much higher than the white rate; about one in every three

Thirty years ago last month, President Johnson used his first State of the Union message to declare "an unconditional war against poverty." Johnson argued that the condition of poverty is not inevitable. "We are not helpless before the iron laws of economics," he said.

Today such notions can seem like mere '60s idealism. The persistence of poverty has caused many Americans to become cynical about change. Ronald Reagan tapped into that cynicism when he gutted many of Johnson's Great Society programs. Yes, Reagan quipped, the nation had fought a war on poverty, but "poverty won."

But is there really nothing to be done about poverty? In this issue, *In These Times* devotes a special section to that question. We begin with award-winning historian Jacqueline Jones' surprising look at the nature of poverty today.



A woman at Chicago's Inspiration Cafe, which feeds homeless people. Despite stereotypes to the contrary, the white poor outnumber the black poor by a more than two-to-one margin.

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**Impoverished residents
of Lewiston, Maine,
a once-thriving
textile mill town.**

blacks is poor, compared to one in every 10 whites. Yet that simple fact too often obscures the large numbers of whites who suffer from chronic unemployment and underemployment, and who live in distressed communities.

The brute facts of poverty confound much of the conventional wisdom. Outside the ghetto (in areas designated by the Census Bureau as non-central-city metropolitan and non-metropolitan), a total of 20 million people are poor (compared to 15 million of all races in the inner city). More poor blacks (11 million), live outside the inner city than in it (6.1 million). The proportion of black people who are poor is consistently higher in non-metropolitan areas of the country (38.9 percent overall) than in inner cities (35.3 percent). For example, the poverty rate among black Southerners who live outside metropolitan areas is 40 percent; among black Northeastern inner-city residents, the rate is 31.3 percent.

These statistics do not necessarily posit a stark rural/urban differentiation in the locus of poverty. The War-on-Poverty generation might have boiled the problem down to the difficult lives of the hardscrabble Kentucky farmer and the Harlem day worker; but today the family farm has all but disappeared, the sharecropping system has vanished, and few people can be classified as "simple rural folk." As

anthropologist Rhoda Halperin suggests, we should explore the "shallow rural"—those places all over the country located between the backwoods and the shopping malls, where people combine gardening, foraging, neighborly cooperation and part-time wage work in order to make a living.

Poverty today is as intractable as ever. In their recent book *Forgotten Americans: Thirty Million Poor in the Land of Opportunity*, John E. Schwarz and Thomas J. Volgy argue persuasively that, despite a decline in the official poverty rate (to 14 percent in 1992 compared with 22.4 percent in 1959), fully one-quarter of the American population can be classified as poor today, a slightly higher percentage than in 1959. Schwarz and Volgy point out that poverty is best measured in terms of a household's ability to pay for basic necessities—food, shelter and clothing—rather than in terms of cash income. According to this more accurate standard, the poverty rate has remained stubbornly high for 30 years.

But if the overall poverty rate has remained relatively constant, the demographic composition of the poor has changed. Although means-tested assistance ("welfare") programs have expanded since the '60s, historic forces have conspired to increase the number of poor people in the United States, and to bring poverty to a variety of different groups affected by the changing economy. The proportion of blue-collar workers in the labor force has decreased by one half since the mid-

'60s. Layoffs in the white-collar sector, and the increase in ill-paid, part-time service jobs (combined with a reduction in poverty among the elderly), means that the post-industrial poor are younger, more able-bodied and more likely to be employed than their counterparts 30 years ago.

Tip O'Neill's immortal words notwithstanding, the politics of poverty are not local, but transnational. The inexorable workings of the global market economy force American companies to consolidate or streamline their operations and to cut costs with innovative technologies or by moving to locations, in the United States or elsewhere, where labor is cheap; workers of all races pay the price. Moreover, refugees from Southeast Asia and Latin America swell the ranks of the unskilled, men and women unlikely to find good jobs or suitable housing in their port-of-entry communities, whether in the Mouth Pleasant district in Washington, D.C. or in the decaying mill towns of New England.

Clearly these economic forces are outside the control of any one community, and they affect people of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds all over the country, in different kinds of places. Small-town America has fallen on hard times, as one-industry communities from the North Carolina Piedmont to the Iowa heartland have succumbed to the ravages of runaway shops, failed businesses and foreign competition. And poverty-stricken, formerly vital working-class suburbs and urban neighborhoods now stand in stark testimony to the collapse of heavy industry, their beleaguered residents facing the same kinds of personal and family hardship as their inner-city counterparts.

How do we account for the persistent focus on the "black underclass"? Certainly America's history of slavery and racial prejudice would suggest that African-Americans today have a unique claim on the nation's resources—though a similar historical claim might also be made on behalf of the Navajo Nation of Arizona and the Sioux on the Pine Ridge Reservation of South Dakota; indeed, some Indian reservations are among the poorest places in the country today.

But most underclass theorists (with the exception of William Julius Wilson and Nicholas Lemann) seem to lack much of a historical consciousness, let alone a historical conscience. Studies of the "underclass" have not inspired historical soul-searching among white Americans; they have, rather, pandered to our society's perverse fascination with the lurid imagery of guns, sex and substance abuse, providing yet more details of what some observers call the violent—and sensational—breakdown in family organization and community standards. The mundane, everyday strivings of the vast majority of poor people (regardless of race) make for dull copy.

Poverty and crime take an enormous toll on African-American inner-city residents today. Nevertheless, policies that target the underclass exclusively are bound to fail. Racialized poverty programs will never receive adequate funding from grudging white taxpayers and their representatives. More significantly, race-specific programs fail to address the essential interconnectedness between the global assembly line and local poverty, as well as the essential

structural similarities among all poor communities throughout the United States—communities that lack decent jobs, accessible health care, good schools and affordable housing.

Our current indifference toward poor people outside of the Northern black ghetto is both morally and politically indefensible. The "underclass" theorists would have us answer the following questions in the affirmative: Isn't it better to suffer a slow death from tuberculosis in Belle Glade, Fla., than to be killed in a shootout in South-Central Los Angeles? Wouldn't you rather watch your child die of starvation in rural Texas than of an overdose of crack in the South Bronx? Isn't it better to focus our energies (in the form of research grants and pilot programs) on single black mothers in the ghetto than on single black mothers in Tunica County, Miss.?

We should refrain from making the choices posed by these questions; better yet, we should refrain from asking these questions at all.

It is doubtful that this country will make any meaningful headway in eliminating poverty as long as the major policy-makers, academicians and journalists who spill so much ink over the problem cannot even identify it properly. Personal and family fortunes are hostage not to character, morality or ambition but rather to the unsettling transformations of the world market—which can wreak havoc regardless of place or the color of a person's skin. Displaced workers, the underemployed, family members just a health care crisis away from complete and utter disaster—these are the poor today; and in their efforts to find employment and care for their families, they have much in common with one another.

The localized and largely symbolic anti-poverty strategies that seem so popular today represent a pathetically inadequate, even cynical, approach to the problems faced by poor people. Meaningful change by definition will be radical change—nationwide abandonment of the barbaric property-tax method of public-school finance; federally sponsored job training and retraining programs; the quadrupling of the minimum wage; public-private cooperation in the creation of good jobs and affordable housing; and the efficient provision of high-quality services (from public transportation to health and childcare) that enable people to find and retain jobs.

Ultimately, gilding the ghetto will not solve the problem of poverty. What we need, instead of more foundation dollars devoted to endless studies of the underclass, are political leaders who will bring us together as a nation, helping us to bind up the wounds caused by the invidious racial and regional distinctions that have shaped anti-poverty programs in this country over the last three decades. Until that time, a whole host of "other Americas" will continue to proliferate outside the ghetto. ◀

Jacqueline Jones is Harry S. Truman Professor of American Civilization at Brandeis University. She is the author of *The Dispossessed: America's Underclasses from the Civil War to the Present* and the Bancroft Prize-winning *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow* (both published by Basic Books).

THE PERSISTENCE OF POVERTY

The real generation gap

The United States has the highest youth poverty rate of any Western nation.

By Mike Males

T

hree decades after the start of the War on Poverty, and 26 years after the Kerner Report challenged the nation to bring together "two societies" divided by race, the United States now confronts even deeper rifts: divisions as much of age as of color. Statistics paint a portrait of a country split along complex demographic fault lines. The ever-present racial cracks are widening and spreading as new, intergenerational chasms split young from old.

In most industrial nations, poverty among youth and adults has been experienced as a "shared fate." In Western Europe, child and adult poverty rates are similar, and considerably lower than in the United States. In our country, by contrast, the youth poverty rate is nearly double that of adults: in 1990, the poverty rate for those under 18 was 21 percent; for adults, 11 percent. The

generation gap holds for all races and ethnic groups. According to recent census figures, 16 percent of white youths face poverty, compared with 9 percent among white adults; among blacks, poverty afflicts a staggering 45 percent of youth and 24 percent of adults. For Latinos, the comparable figures are 38 and 23 percent. These are by far the highest youth poverty rates and the widest adult-youth income gaps of any Western nation.

This hasn't always been the case. During the '60s and early '70s, a myriad of Great Society programs, then aimed more or less equitably at all age groups, had sent child poverty plummeting from 27 percent in 1960 to 14 percent by 1973. Since then, child poverty has skyrocketed—up to 21 percent by 1991, the highest rate since 1965.

The country would hardly tolerate similar indifference toward adults. When, in the Eisenhower years, the emerging medium of television brought a national disgrace to public attention—6 million elderly, 35 per-

cent of those over age 65, living below the poverty line—the country responded with a concerted, and largely successful, campaign to eradicate poverty among the elderly. Today, the cost of senior entitlement programs, from Social Security to subsidized housing, exceeds a quarter-trillion federal dollars annually.

From 1978 to 1987, spending on the elderly boomed by 52 percent while spending on children fell 4 percent. During the past decade, the elderly have seen continued declines in poverty—down to 12 percent by 1991—while poverty among young families has mushroomed. The elderly are not the only age group favored by modern public and private disbursement schemes. Today, Americans over age 35, whose average incomes are double those of younger age groups, comprise one of the wealthiest generations in American history.

The generational rift is growing. A recent report released by the California Assembly's Commission on the Status of African-American Males provides evidence of the many ways divisions of age have begun to eclipse the traditional divisions of race. Among America's middle class, concentrated in older age groups, race has become a surprisingly trivial factor. In California's middle- to upper-middle-income brackets, whites are only 20 percent more likely than blacks, 10 percent more likely than Latinos and no more likely than Asians to earn \$30,000 to \$60,000 a year. The percentage of California's black families owning their own homes is almost as high as that for whites. And, like middle-aged and older whites, non-whites over age 40 generally enjoyed rising incomes and decreasing poverty rates during the '70s and '80s.

Contrast this with the diametrically opposed conditions faced by California's mostly young, mostly non-white poor:



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Poverty afflicts a staggering 45 percent of black youths.

in the eighth-richest state in the world's sixth-richest nation, one in six black males is arrested every year, four in 10 imprisoned felons are black, one in four black men has been unemployed for more than two years, and blacks' per-capita financial worth is less than one-fourth that of whites. Among California's 200,000 black males ages 15-24, 80,000 to 100,000 are arrested every year, half for felonies. Furthermore, unemployment and poverty rates approach 50 percent among young black males in the state. For California's young Latino men, the situation is nearly as desperate: one-third arrested every year, poverty and joblessness affecting similar numbers.

At the bottom of California's income scale, comprised overwhelmingly of youths and young families, the same racial inequities found 30 and 50 years ago still apply more than ever: blacks remain twice as likely, and Latinos 60 percent more likely, than whites to earn less than \$15,000 a year. The gap is widest among the young: black youth are three times more likely, and Latino youth 2.5 times more likely, to live in families with incomes below federal poverty

ty guidelines than are white youth. Given that young people make up a higher percentage of the minority population than they do of the white population, anti-youth policies have magnified penalties for non-whites; anti-minority and anti-poor measures, in turn, have their worst effects on youth.

Having for more than a decade legislatively appropriated hundreds of billions of public dollars for their own enrichment, older Americans now demand that the millions of youths impoverished in the process behave and stop generating "social costs." But many among the young are not cooperating with attempts to marginalize them. Rather than passively submitting to increasingly draconian age-targeted coercions—ranging from "subminimum training wages" to tightened curfews—millions of young people are detaching from their elders in a more fundamental, violent and irreparable manner than even the "drop out" '60s saw.

Yet Washington and state capitals remain officially oblivious to this menacing new generational disconnection. The political wrangling today is not about whether young people should have the same educational and employment opportunities afforded generations before them. Instead, politicians are focusing on mythical schemes of youth management—so that (mostly middle-aged and older) Americans can be spared threats of violence and higher taxes. But today's streets generate more violence than even the most punitive caging scheme can contain.

Though one would hardly know it from reading the headlines, a strategy to defuse the "youth crisis" lies right before our eyes: a real national commitment of the kind that modern adults have found resources to fund when their own generational interests were at stake. Consider: In California in 1992, 1 million white youths between the ages of 12 and 17 accounted for just 82 murders, a rate so low that if observed by all age groups nationwide, 10,000 lives would have been spared. In affluent, racially diverse San Mateo County, Calif., fewer than 1 percent of girls between the ages of 12 and 17 give birth each year—a rate that would cut national school-age births by 50 percent.

The implications are clear: if poverty among youth were reduced to the level experienced by adults, the "youth crisis" would disappear. But, given rising poverty figures and record federal debt, the president—to the extent that he endorses current wisdom—is boxed in. Though Clinton and his advisers surely must recognize the dead-end failure of present policies, his administration is not even trying to build a case for reform. Rather, Democrats, with their anti-youth rhetoric, are confessing final defeat in the 30-year-old War on Poverty, offering us the sorry spectacle of a political leadership with no better solution to a growing crisis than to blame 15-year-olds for conditions they had no part in creating.

Mike Males writes regularly on youth issues for *In These Times*.

THE PERSISTENCE OF POVERTY

Can we save the inner city?

For several decades, starting just before World War I, the intersection of 35th and State Streets in Chicago was the heart of an African-American cultural and commercial hub known as Bronzeville. Businessmen and blueswomen alike gave vitality to a neighborhood populated by modestly paid blacks from the South who—when they had a chance—worked in the city's meatpacking plants, steel mills and railyards.

Now dreary, crime-ridden public housing high-rises stretch for several miles down the west side of State Street. Few stores of any type remain. Buildings that once housed historic black enterprises are boarded up and crumbling. Nearby multistory factory buildings are abandoned hulks with broken windows. Much housing is vacant; even more has been torn down.

Some experts are giving up hope. But the truth is, we haven't really tried.

By David Moberg
CHICAGO

The surrounding neighborhoods, where the population has plunged by two-thirds since 1950, are now among the poorest in the nation: as many as two out of every three residents live in poverty, and more than half are on public assistance. Through three decades of intermittent federal action on civil rights and poverty, these communities have progressively deteriorated.

Can a neighborhood like this still be saved? That question is being hotly debated among academics and even among the private foundations that have long bankrolled community-development projects. Journalist Nicholas Lemann, author of *The Promised Land*, argues in a recent *New York Times Magazine* article that it is folly to imagine that such urban wastelands can be economically redeveloped. These neighborhoods never had many jobs and now cannot attract business, Lemann asserts. Economic development of poor neighborhoods hasn't worked and can't work, he writes.

Sokoni Karanja disagrees. Karanja, who holds a doctorate in urban planning and has received a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant, is the director of the Center for New Horizons, a community organization. Over the past three years, he has helped bring together more than 80 community organizations and 3,000 people to draft a plan to restore the neighborhood.

Karanja believes that redevelopment can succeed only with a grass-roots strategy that has broad support and tackles education, housing, health, jobs, recreation and much more. "It's not one thing but at least 25 to 30 things, and they're all difficult," he says. "It won't happen with a quick fix."

Karanja argues that such a development scheme has never really been tested. Mayors like the late Richard J. Daley of Chicago lobbied to change early poverty programs so that participation by the poor would be minimized, and development money would be funneled through political machines and government agencies. Since then, Karanja says, when federal funds have gone to poor communities, it has usually provoked futile squabbling among various agencies, politicians and community groups.

The South Side of Chicago would be a worthy candidate for one of the nine new "empowerment zones" that President Clinton is touting as the centerpiece of his modest urban strategy. Lemann's justifiable skepticism about what these zones can do—shared even by their advocates—does not warrant the conclusion that rebuilding historic Bronzeville is a lost cause. After all, even within the area's ravaged landscape there are pockets of rehabbed housing, a few lively shopping strips, some strong community organizations and other indications of hope for revival.

The 1993 empowerment zone legislation, an update of

the long-languishing enterprise zone idea, will provide \$2.5 billion in both wage credits to employers hiring empowerment zone residents and tax incentives to businesses located in the zones. There's also \$1 billion in new social service grants and a grab bag of other less targeted resources.

After years of neglect, virtually any new money for poor urban neighborhoods will be better than nothing. But even

though the empowerment zones are less of a tax and deregulation bonanza for business than earlier enterprise zones, they are still anemic responses to a grave situation.

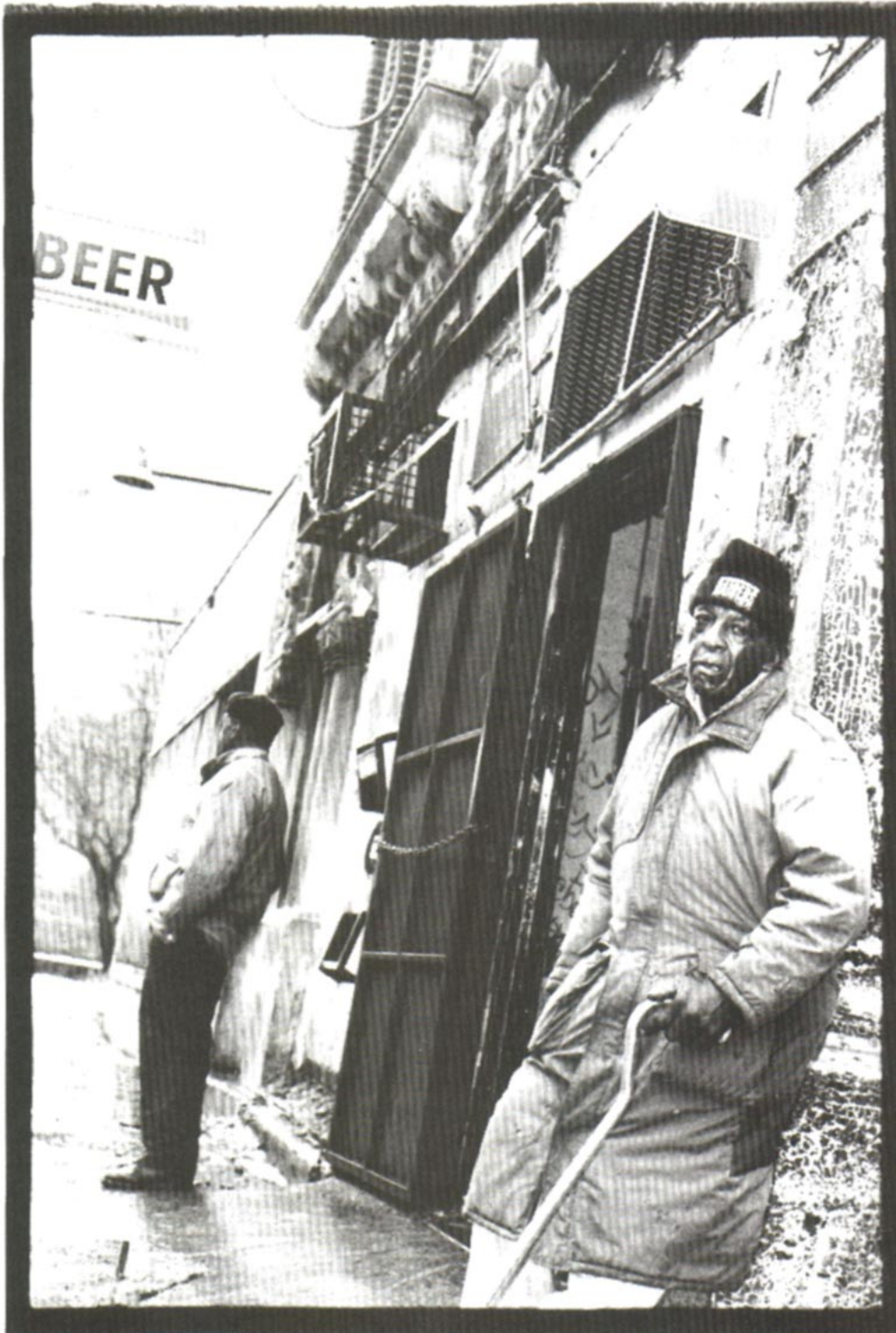
By contrast to the \$3.5 billion Clinton is proposing to spend on the zones, more than half of his \$23 billion crime bill would go for prisons. Spending the same amount wisely in neighborhoods like Chicago's mid-South Side could elimi-

nate much of the supposed need for those penal facilities.

Clinton also has some low-budget initiatives, such as providing incentives for community-development financial institutions (contained in a bill now awaiting Senate action) or changing the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) regulations for bank lending. Both of these proposed reforms are aimed at directing more private capital into poor neighborhoods. (See *In These Times*, June 28, 1993.) Ultimately, they may prove more beneficial than the empowerment zones.

There's a simple truth behind the complex debates on poverty: poor individuals—or communities—are poor because they lack both income and capital. Yet instead of providing more money for already poor, black urban communities, our society has done just the opposite: for more than 15 years real incomes—from low-wage work or public assistance—have been plummeting. Public and private investment in poor black neighborhoods has been meager at best, as the housing stock and infrastructure have deteriorated.

Even the trickle of spending designated for



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the poor does not in fact end up in their hands. John McKnight of Northwestern University's Center for Urban Affairs calculated that government poverty spending is equivalent to about \$20,000 a year for a family of three in Chicago. Yet the poor got only about one-third of that in cash. McKnight argues that poor people, especially if they organize themselves, would be far better off simply getting the money.

Even the best conceived, most generously funded development effort would fail, given the staggering disinvestment and income losses in many urban neighborhoods. What's stunning is not that most projects have failed, but that any have worked.

If we are going to judge whether it's possible to develop a neighborhood like Bronzeville, we need to understand how it came to its present sorry state. This sets us squarely in the midst of an academic debate between two leading University of Chicago sociologists, William Julius Wilson, author of

The Truly Disadvantaged, and Douglas Massey, author of *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*. (See *In These Times*, Aug. 23, 1993.)

In crude terms, the question is: what most accounts for the intense urban poverty around 35th and State Streets—race or class? In other words, is discrimination to blame or the workings of the market? And should the solutions be race-specific or race-neutral?

Massey argues that the extremely high level of black residential segregation, especially in Northern cities over the past 80 years, is unique and unparalleled in American history. Despite 30 years of legislation, discriminatory practices by individuals, institutions (such as banks and realtors) and the government persist, although sometimes in more subtle ways than in the past.

No ethnic group has experienced anything like the degree of social isolation that is commonplace for blacks. On a sociological scale in which 100 equals complete segregation,

Urban poverty theory comes full circle

For decades, debates have raged about the causes of the disproportionate rate of urban black poverty. In the '60s, the "culture of poverty" explanation held sway. This theory blamed the emergence of the underclass on patterns of behavior that were inconsistent with socioeconomic advancement. According to its most enlightened proponents, this culture was a coping mechanism for the chronic social immobility experienced by those living in areas of concentrated poverty.

Those socialized in such a culture were said to lack impulse control and the ability to defer gratification. The instability of their families led to early sexual initiations, lack of spousal fidelity and high levels of child abandonment.

Perhaps the most prominent proponent of this thinking was Daniel Patrick Moynihan who, as assistant secretary of labor, authored a report that labeled these characteristics "tangles of pathology."

Conservative theorists, seeking ways to discredit President Lyndon Johnson's ambitious War on Poverty, picked up on this argument and used it to blame poverty on its victims. People were poor because of self-destructive behavior patterns, they insisted. In reaction to this sophistry, liberal theorists began recasting the black family as a beleaguered but resilient institution under relentless attack by institutional racism.

By the onset of the Reagan revolution, some conservative theorists were employing a new logic. Trumpeting triumphs of a civil rights movement that they had ardently opposed, they argued that blacks now had legal access to American prosperity, but preferred the easy road of welfare dependency.

Charles Murray, in *Losing Ground: Social Policy 1950-1980*, blamed poverty on the same liberal welfare state that had been designed to eliminate it. Murray argued that federal anti-poverty programs altered the incentives governing the behavior of poor people by reducing the desirability of marriage, increasing the benefits of unwed childbearing and lessening the lure of menial labor. The welfare state effectively undermined those cultural characteristics that encouraged success, Murray and his legion of acolytes argued.

In the '90s, Murray has dusted off and reinvigorated the argument, and it has reappeared in the current debate on welfare reform. Perhaps this is Murray's way of belatedly responding to William Julius Wilson, a University of Chicago sociologist and the man most responsible for debunking *Losing Ground*. Wilson argues that macro-economic shifts were responsible for the peculiar and intractable species of urban poverty that now bedevils us.

Wilson primarily promotes liberal policies to address the problems of the ghetto poor, but he champions a race-neutral approach. This neutrality is palatable to the "new Democrat" postures of the Clinton administration.

Another University of Chicago sociologist, Douglas Massey, has recently been getting a lot of attention by arguing that racial segregation is the key structural factor responsible for the perpetuation of black poverty in the United States. Ironically, Massey's diagnosis closely echoes one made by the Kerner Commission in 1968. The commission—established to study the causes of inner-city riots—squarely placed the blame for ghetto poverty on white America. "What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto," the report read. "White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it." The message was resolute, honest and well-received at the time. Ultimately, it was ignored.

—Salim Muwakkil

the index of segregation for most past and present new immigrants has been about 30 to 40 or less, according to Massey. But the average index of segregation for blacks in major Northern cities was nearly 80 in 1980 and 77 in 1990 (though slightly less in the South).

Despite the civil rights revolution, those indices of segregation have barely changed: in Chicago in 1920, the figure stood at around 90; in 1990 it had dropped only slightly, to 86. The record of progress elsewhere is similarly slow. Furthermore, affluent blacks are virtually as segregated residentially as poor blacks; the poorest Latinos typically live in more integrated neighborhoods than the most affluent blacks, Massey reports.

Numerous recent studies have demonstrated that blacks continue to suffer extreme discrimination in searching for homes and in obtaining mortgages, regardless of their income. The long history of urban renewal, public housing construction and other government policies at all levels has further contributed to concentrating blacks in the ghetto.

As Massey explained to a Chicago Urban League conference recently: "Take a group of people, segregate them, cut off capital and guess what? The neighborhoods go downhill. There's no other outcome possible."

Lemann blithely describes the loss of population in poor ghetto areas as simply the standard upward American march out of lowly neighborhoods. Yet Massey demonstrates that on the whole blacks have not had the same opportunities as other Americans to link residential mobility with social mobility. Because of segregation, they are thus denied the options—living close to better jobs, building equity in houses, pursuing safer communities or better schools—of white middle-class suburbanites. Affluent blacks move, but primarily to neighborhoods that are mainly African-American.

Residential segregation leads to an unparalleled concentration of poverty and its related social problems, intensifying the downward spiral of community destruction. Massey sees segregation as the essential creator of the underclass. Racial concentration may secure offices for a few black politicians, he argues, but in the long run it weakens blacks politically because they and their needs are isolated. The implication is that only a massive assault on this segregation, as well as discrimination by lending institutions, can undo the underclass and make it possible for Bronzeville and other such communities to be revived.

Wilson, on the other hand, has long contended that overt

racial discrimination has "declining significance" in explaining black community problems. Instead, the flight of manufacturing from central cities and other economic changes has left many blacks without traditional jobs and unprepared for the new urban service and information economy, he argues. As black men were less able to support a family, marriage and family declined. Children of those single-mother families were impoverished and disadvantaged.

In a recent lecture (which was based on research for

his upcoming book, *The New Urban Poverty*), Wilson acknowledged the importance of segregation, but argued that "to focus mainly on segregation is to miss dynamic aspects of social and economic change in Chicago." Today's hard-core urban poverty results from high and concentrated joblessness. Wilson used Bronzeville as an example: in 1950, 69 percent of neighborhood men over 14 were employed; in 1990 only 37 percent of those over 16 had jobs. The quality of jobs also declined. In 1970, 72 percent of young employed men worked in manufacturing and construction, but by 1987 only 28 percent of young employed men had jobs



in those decently paid blue-collar occupations.

Joblessness makes a difference. Black and white youths at age 11 are equally likely to commit violent crimes but by their late 20s blacks are four times more likely to be violent offenders, Wilson says. There's one big exception: blacks and whites who are employed differ little in violent behavior.

The ghetto today may be just as segregated as ever, but it is far less stable, Wilson argues. Moreover, rapid desegregation seems impossible as long as whites can and will flee a neighborhood when the number of blacks rises. Politically, he concludes, blacks would gain most from broad policies to create demand for more workers, to provide universal health insurance and to boost low incomes. If blacks are working, they can better organize socially and politically.

Massey's work demonstrates that racial discrimination in housing is a unique and persistent cause of the terrible poverty of inner-city blacks. Wilson's work underscores how changes in American business have contributed to



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hard-core joblessness. Together these forces have created the raw underclass culture that in turn is used to further legitimate racism.

Ideally, the government should both attack discrimination and stimulate job creation. Realistically, it is likely to do very little of either, although Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros has embraced Massey's work and shown interest in more aggressive fair housing action.

Where does all this leave Bronzeville? The community plan envisions building on the recent surge in middle-class black rehabilitation of the inexpensive but splendid old homes that remain in some areas and on building new, moderate-income housing. That in turn would support new retail centers. Karanja hopes to tap economic opportunities on the neighborhood's periphery—an expanding convention center, downtown developments, local universities—as well as within the neighborhood, such as a newly created black historic district and blues entertainment center. Some public housing would be rehabbed; other units would be razed and used for low-rise housing, schools or other new institutions.

In the shadow of the projects, the plan seems utopian. But if the federal government were willing to invest in housing and infrastructure in Bronzeville a fraction of what it spends on mortgage deductions and highways in the suburbs, then the plan might have a chance.

Even private investment could click, especially with some government cooperation. Most bankers look upon neighborhoods like Chicago's mid-South Side as a barren wasteland. Nonetheless, the 1976 CRA requires banks to make some effort to lend in all local communities.

Organized pressure over CRA compliance has generated more than \$100 billion in bank loans to lower-income neighborhoods across the nation. Last year, the Woodstock Institute, a Chicago-based bank research group, reported that CRA loans for single-family homes and apartment buildings in low-income neighborhoods have proven no riskier than loans in better-off communities.

Nevertheless, most banks have dragged their feet about even minimal CRA compliance. Bank regulatory agencies, acting at Clinton's request, recently proposed new CRA regulations that would focus more on performance in lending,

services and investment—and less on process and paperwork. The regulations also would force banks to reveal some data on business loans, as they now must with housing loans. This would help community watchdog groups press banks for increased inner-city business lending.

The proposed rules may never be instituted, due to Federal Reserve opposition. But even if the new rules are enacted, community-development strategists say they don't go far enough. Though the new rules would increase the pressure on the worst banks, they would also let many banks—especially the smaller banks that make up three-fourths of the industry—to escape close scrutiny.

Community advocates want the CRA to cover all financial institutions—including entities like mutual funds and insurance companies—and they want the act to impose tougher performance standards on lenders. After all, the evidence is now overwhelming that lack of credit in poor black neighborhoods represents a severe failure of the market with devastating social consequences, not the rational wisdom of the invisible hand.

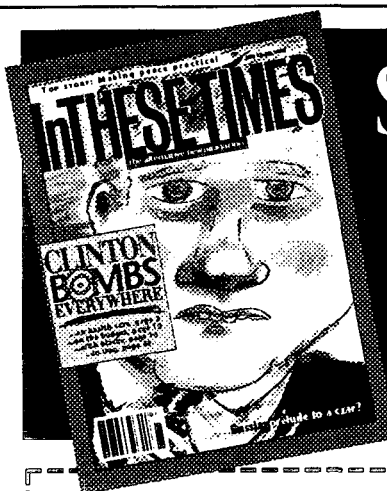
Throughout many unstable but not desperately poor black Chicago neighborhoods, non-profit groups, private developers and some banks are successfully rehabbing old buildings and even building new single-family homes. Without CRA requirements, little of this would be happening; with greater federal support, much more could take place. Other local development groups are successfully retaining small manufacturing firms and even recruiting some new employers.

Yet these efforts at community economic development must contend with the much more powerful forces of continued segregation and discrimination, the mobility of capital and the restructuring of American business. Massey and Wilson clash on important points, but together their research shows that racial discrimination and market forces combine to wreak peculiarly harsh devastation on blacks.

This combined outside assault makes the resurrection of Bronzeville a tough proposition. It's hard to argue with Lemann's contention that years of scholarly theorizing about community redevelopment have had little result on the streets.

Still, advocates like Karanja are right in saying that the energies of both the government and the people within poor neighborhoods have never been fully committed to community development. If such a commitment were made, such efforts would need to focus on housing and education, supplemented by measures to link urban blacks to suburban jobs. Yet there are still inner-city industrial neighborhoods where manufacturing and other employment could be regenerated.

Wholesale residential desegregation, however desirable, seems remote, even with more aggressive fair housing action. Consequently, despite the all difficulties, it is both morally and pragmatically indefensible to abandon the hard task of economic development for neighborhoods like Bronzeville.



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POLITICS

An insolvent foreign policy

When the nation can least afford it, the Clinton administration risks overextending U.S. commitments abroad.

By John B. Judis
WASHINGTON D.C.

In a slim 1943 book, *Foreign Policy: Shield of the Republic*, journalist Walter Lippmann propounded what came to be known as the "principle of solvency." Lippman argued that the United States should only make such commitments as it was willing to meet and capable of meeting. The government, he asserted, should not adopt goals that the public doesn't support and that it does not have the industrial and military might to achieve.

In the last month, Clinton has encountered two formidable tests of this principle. The first came in deciding whether NATO should incorporate Eastern Europe in its defense perimeter. The second—which will be shared by Defense Secretary-designate William J. Perry—is to set the Pentagon and American

military policy on a firmer footing. The president just barely passed the first test, but so far has failed in the second.

At the recent NATO summit in Brussels, Clinton faced the question of whether NATO should admit Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia as full members, thereby guaranteeing their security against attack. Russian leaders have not asked to join NATO, and have expressed consternation about NATO expanding eastward.

But Germany, concerned about having to defend its own perimeter, wanted NATO to include the Eastern European countries. Clinton also was under pressure from Henry Kissinger, Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IN) and former Secretary of State James Baker either to admit the Eastern European countries now or to set up a process for doing so in the very near future. "Otherwise," Baker wrote in a column, "the most successful alliance in history is destined to follow the threat that created it into the dustbin of history."

But expanding NATO at this point would be folly. By encircling Russia with a military alliance, the United States and Western Europe would be recreating the circum-

stances that helped create the Cold War in 1947. Expanding NATO would also entail a gross violation of the principle of solvency: it would mean making a military commitment that neither Washington nor its allies are ready to meet.

During the Cold War, the West repeatedly balked at defending Eastern Europe against Soviet aggression. Now, even as the American military force in Europe is to be cut from 300,000 to 100,000 and as Western European arms budgets are shrinking 2 to 3 percent a year, Kissinger, Baker and others are proposing that the United States and NATO *extend* their current military commitments.

Within the Clinton administration, Secretary of State Warren Christopher was leaning toward Kissinger's position, but Ambassador-at-Large Strobe Talbott, who has been nominated to become Christopher's deputy secretary of state, disagreed. Clinton finally decided to take Talbott's advice and finesse the question. He proposed inviting the Eastern European countries—including Russia—to become part of a "partnership for peace," which will consult with NATO countries and conduct parallel military exercises.

But the issue is still far from settled. After the NATO summit, for example, the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John Shalikashvili, told Polish officials that "it is not a matter of if, but of when," Poland and other Eastern European countries would become part of NATO.

Clinton's second test will come over this year's defense budget. In his campaign, Clinton pledged to cut \$60 billion, or 5 percent, from the military budget by 1998. Last August, pressed to reduce the deficit further, Clinton cut

\$104 billion. Now, Clinton's Office of Management and Budget has discovered that inflation will force additional cuts ranging from \$20 billion to \$50 billion. The military and its allies in Congress are howling that the cuts won't allow it to do its job. But the real issue is what exactly the military's job is in the post-Cold War world.

Last spring, faced with this question, Aspin undertook what he called a "bottom up" review of the nation's military commitments and goals. Perry, whom Aspin chose as his deputy secretary of defense, worked closely with him on the review. The final product, which Aspin made public last fall, is a web of confusion and contradiction that has fueled the opposition to any further cuts in the military budget. Unfortunately, it has become administration policy and it will guide Perry's decisions.

The report sets out "four dangers" that the United States faces in the post-Cold War world. These are the proliferation of nuclear weapons, "regional bullies and regional threats," the threat to nascent democracy in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, and the danger of a "weak economy."

Aspin does not spell out criteria for deciding when a "regional bully" actually threatens America's "vital interests." Nevertheless, he declares that the United States has to have the "military forces sufficient to fight and win two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts." Why two and not just one? In the press conference that accompanied the release of the report, Aspin and then-Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell acknowledged that it was unlikely the United States would face two "Desert Storms" at the same time. They contended, however, that if the military does not have the force to fight a second war, it will encourage "the very conflict you do not want to see occur." By this reasoning, of course, the United States should be prepared to fight an infinite number of regional conflicts.

To make matters worse, Aspin's projected expenditures—while enormous—do not provide the United States with the weaponry and personnel to fight "two nearly simultaneous wars." As numerous defense analysts have argued, even under the more generous Bush administration budgets the United States would not have possessed the specialized military infrastructure to have waged another regional war while it was conducting Desert Storm. This fact only encourages pro-Pentagon advocates to complain that the administration is not spending enough on the military.

Aspin's review is also plagued by a contradiction between its goal of winning regional conflicts and its other

goals of strengthening democracy in Eastern Europe and the economy at home. To meet these latter goals, the United States needs to spend less on the military and more on foreign aid and domestic investment. Aspin's two-war strategy robs the White House of an important means by which it could prevent regional disorders from arising in the first place.

It would be nice to think that Clinton asked for Aspin's resignation because he was critical of the review. But Clinton was critical of Aspin as an administrator and a tactician rather than as a grand strategist. Both Adm. Bobby Inman, Clinton's first choice to replace Aspin, and Sen. Sam Nunn (D-GA), who turned down the job, would have been expected to back the strategy, but to insist on greater funding to carry it out. Now, Perry will have to explain how the administration can carry out the strategy he helped Aspin design without boosting the defense budget.

Clinton has certainly had a rocky year in foreign policy—evidenced by, among other things, the turnover at the top tier of the State and Defense Departments. He started to pull himself up in Brussels, but now, with his nomination of Perry, he seems on the verge of reaffirming a military strategy that will subvert his domestic program at home and set him in search of imaginary bullies abroad.

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**Defense
Secretary-
designate
William J.
Perry
shares his
predecessor's
bad ideas.**

VIEWPOINT

A united approach

By Kenneth Zapp

The proposed NATO plan to use air power to help deliver aid and relieve U.N. troops in Bosnia would be a good stopgap measure—but it would not end the senseless suffering there. The people of former Yugoslavia need a clear, united approach by Western powers to force the feuding nationalities to reach a reasonable compromise.

The latest European initiative for partitioning Bosnia has failed because none of the three Bosnian sides believes the West is united enough to make each faction accept necessary sacrifices.

The future Bosnia must include territories where Muslims had constituted the majority in order to make it economically viable and politically stable. Serbs must relinquish more of the land they took from Muslims in central Bosnia. Croats must return access to the Adriatic Sea and control of Mostar to the Bosnian government. Conversely, the largely Muslim Bosnian government must surrender claim over Serb and Croat parts of both the former republic and Sarajevo. But none of the parties will act first. The others must be pressed to do so simultaneously.

The search for a compromise solution must begin with points that separate the Western countries. Disunity among Western powers stems from our divergent historical interests, domestic political situations and misconceptions about Bosnia. Initially, all

failed to foresee the instability local multiparty elections would produce in the multinational Yugoslav state.

On the weekend before Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in June 1991, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker announced that we supported only a united Yugoslavia. Though his goal was to avoid weakening then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the Yugoslav army understood that the West would not intervene if it used force to preserve the federation.

Later that year, a European commission ruled that Croatia had not met its criteria to justify recognition as a sovereign state. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, however, recognized Catholic Croatia prematurely in January 1992 for domestic political reasons. When Europe and the United States followed Germany in recognizing Croatia, Serbs, who controlled one-third of the republic, felt they had no hope for a political solution.

Lord Carrington, the European Community mediator, sought the use of referendums in disputed regions of Croatia (and elsewhere) to set national

borders. But when Croatian President Franjo Tudjman refused to allow such votes in his republic, Germany resisted attempts to pressure him.

Kohl then contributed to the tragedy in Bosnia by advising Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic to hold a referendum on succession from Yugoslavia. Serbs, with 33 percent of the population, insisted that a vote be binding only if a majority of each nationality in Bosnia approved it. Izetbegovic, with Kohl's support, refused. Though the violent Serb response can never be justified, it was totally predictable for those who know the region.

Bosnia was never a country and never had the preconditions of a nation-state. The territory of the Yugoslav republic had always been the buffer zone between rival empires. The people there never considered themselves Bosnian: Serbs were Serbs, Croats Croats and most of the Muslims before were either Yugoslavs or simply Muslims.

The internal borders of Yugoslavia that formed Bosnia are not the basis of a sovereign state. They had separated the old empires and served the political purposes of the former regime, but not the interests or needs of the people living there.

The cultural diversity of Sarajevo, praised by progressive Americans, is not the basis of national sovereignty. Outsiders forget that the city flourished since World War II in a federal state that protected all peoples from domination by one nationality. Absence of this context removed the foundation of the treasured coexistence, at least among the nationalist leaders. Also, the multiculturalism of Sarajevo did not reflect the relations among people in much of the countryside.

Unfortunately, the Serb atrocities against Muslim villages in 1992 led President-elect Clinton to signal support for the outgunned Bosnian government. American moral outrage is

*The West must
impose a solution
in Bosnia.*

never a basis for rational policy. Clinton, saying that no agreement should be imposed on Bosnia, has encouraged Izetbegovic to hold out for terms that may not be realistic.

American sympathy for the underdog Muslims also feeds calls for arming the Bosnian government. Such well-intentioned assistance would only condemn more innocent civilians to death as the Serbs and Croats are fully prepared to raise the level of fighting. That's why former U.S. Ambassador to Yugoslavia Warren Zimmerman, who resigned his State Department position recently to protest Western inaction in Bosnia, remained opposed to ending the arms embargo on the region.

The innocent people in former Yugoslavia cannot depend on their "leaders," none of whom place their citizens' well-being above personal political objectives. Thus, the West must impose a solution on these politicians.

Though Serbs clearly carry most of the blame, such a plan must not take sides in the conflict. All parties share some blame. All parties have acted irresponsibly and have violated basic human rights. The key interests of all sides must be addressed if the solution is to last. To this end, a plan could include the following points:

- Referendums in regions with substantial minority populations. This includes Serb areas in Croatia, along with Albanian and Muslim regions of

Serbia.

- Division of Bosnia with the central government obtaining additional land from Serb and Croat forces, including direct access to the sea.

- Immediate use of U.N. forces to supply desperately needed aid to all regions of Bosnia.

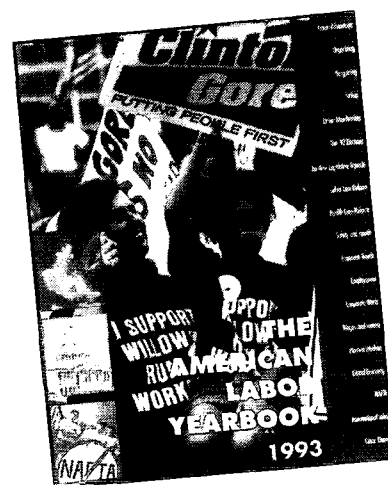
- Total embargo of any region or country that violates the terms.

- Prosecution of those directly responsible for human rights abuses.

Failure to forge a Western solution to the Yugoslav crisis would perpetuate the suffering there and invite aggression by nationalist politicians elsewhere. There is no alternative to an internationally imposed agreement based as much as possible on principles of local self-determination. ▲

Kenneth Zapp worked in Yugoslavia for 21 years, and has been visiting professor at the University of Sarajevo. He is now professor and interim dean for the College of Management at Metropolitan State University in Minneapolis.

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I N T H E A R T S

The wrong man

"A corrupt British justice system gave Gerry Conlon 15 years in prison. Hollywood is now giving him 15 minutes of fame."

By Pat Dowell

They didn't do it," a police interrogator whispers to his colleague during a break from torturing bombing suspect Gerry Conlon, the protagonist of *In the Name of the Father*. "They all did it," the other interrogator smugly replies—and it's clear by "all" that he means not just the young people who would become known as the Guildford Four, but the Irish in general.

Being Irish and from Belfast was apparently Gerry Conlon's chief offense in 1974, when he was arrested under the draconian terms of the new Prevention of Terrorism Act. Conlon (Daniel Day-Lewis) had been in England in October when two pubs were bombed. A layabout and a petty thief, Conlon was looking for "dope and free love," according to the movie, and found precious little of either.

On Conlon's return

home to Belfast the police snatched him back to London and put the screws to him, without counsel or communication, as allowed by law. Conlon and a friend confessed—under torture, they claimed. The four who were tried for the crime were convicted, and a grumpy judge, grouching about the elimination of the death penalty, sentenced them all to long terms.

Conlon's 15-year jailhouse campaign to prove his innocence eventually gained the support of an international array of civil libertarians, clergy and Irish nationalists. Ultimately, evidence that the police had lied led the British government to overturn the convictions. The Guildford Four were released in 1989, but the controversy that surrounded them lives on—and will likely be stoked a little more by Jim Sheridan's rousing piece of agitprop. Too bad the film didn't appear 10 years ago, when the Guildford Four really needed it.

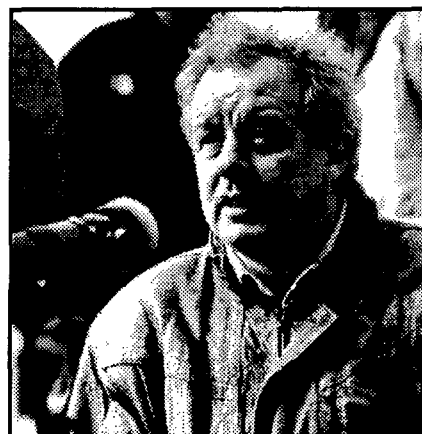
Sheridan, the Irish director of *My Left Foot* and *The Field*, is either the best or the worst person (depending on your political

persuasion) to bring Gerry Conlon's story to the screen. Sheridan's movie is aflame with outrage. He pulls few punches in his portrait of the British police and judiciary, who were desperate to nail somebody for the IRA's unnerving bombing campaign on English soil.

As the title suggests, Sheridan sees in the story the politics of patriarchy. In Sheridan's version of his life, Gerry Conlon seeks not only justice but a suitable father to guide him. Will it be his own physically frail but spiritually resilient dad, Giuseppe (Pete Postlethwaite), who was thrown into jail along with his son and died there? Or the IRA, as embodied in the incarcerated bomber named Joe McAndrew (Don Baker)?

McAndrew is a fictional character, standing in for all IRA gunmen, and his officially designated ruthlessness in the film allows Sheridan to say "a pox on both your houses" to the police and the terrorists. When McAndrew capriciously and brutally murders a warder in prison, Gerry repudiates him.

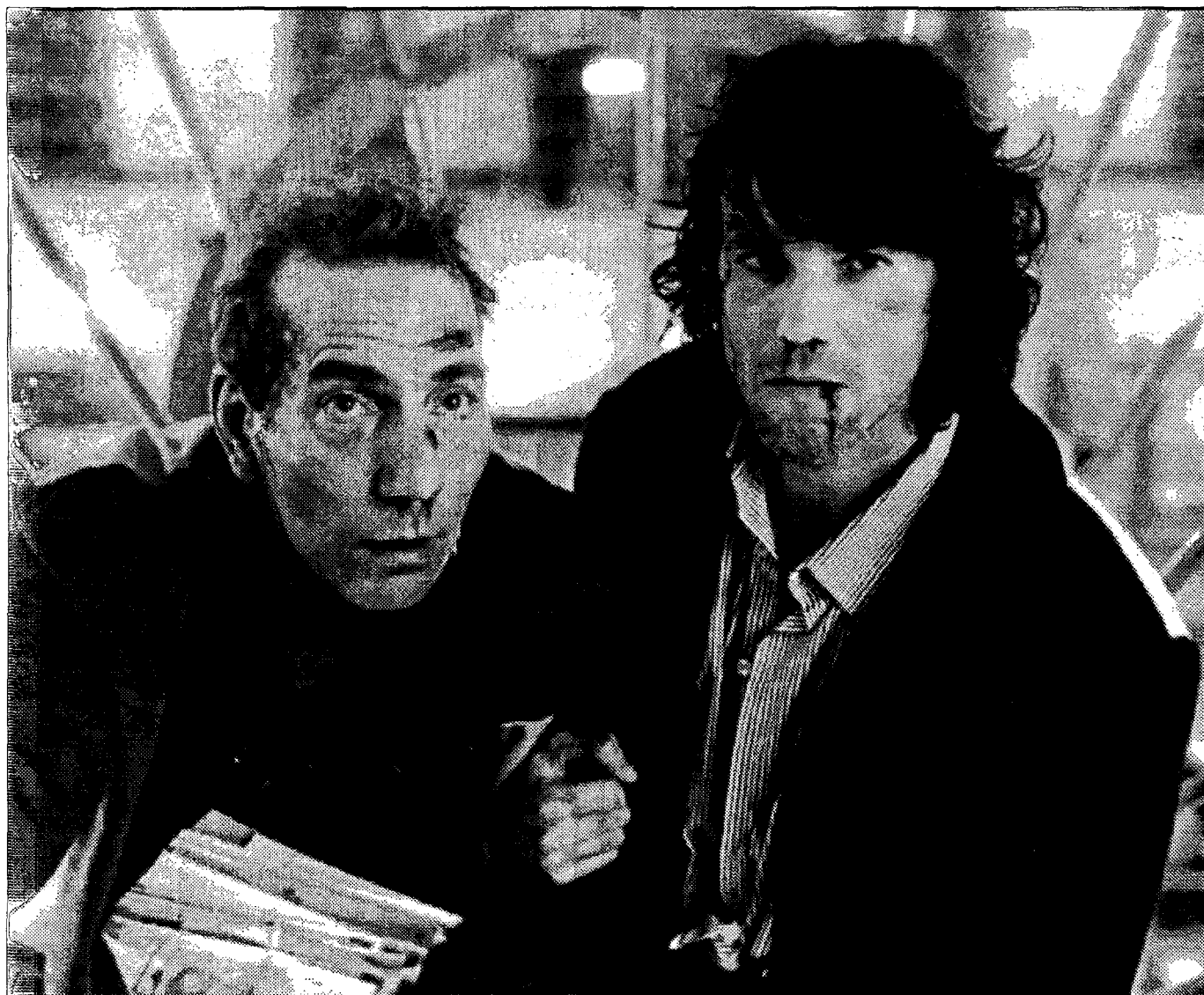
But in cinematic terms,



DAVID BURNETT

In the Name of the Father
Directed by Jim Sheridan

JONATHAN HESSON



McAndrew makes a vivid impression as a heroic challenge to the illegitimate patriarchal and colonial authority of Britain—which Sheridan views, as he's explained in interviews, as having usurped the authority of Irish fathers in their own society. In other words, the crime against Gerry Conlon was perpetrated in the name of the false father, England, while the quest for justice is being pursued in the name of the true father, Ireland. Giuseppe Conlon's deathbed request was that Gerry clear both their names.

The restoration of patriarchy, including Irish patriarchy, rings a bit hollow as a structuring metaphor in a tale about injustice. But I'm happy to report that the movie spends most of its time down on the pavement rather than up in the philosophical clouds. The opening scenes of a spontaneous riot in Belfast are magnificently chaotic; the interrogation of Gerry Conlon proceeds in throat-grabbing starts and shocks; prison life is loud, grubby and disheartening. (Although there are some perks—a jigsaw-puzzle map of the world, with pieces soaked in LSD, lets Gerry for once ingest Britain with joy.)

Questions of fact vs. fiction are more likely to dog Sheridan than the tale of two fathers he has overlaid on Conlon's life. Dramatic license is always a bone of contention in docudramas, and *In the Name of the Father* does its share of altering, compressing and making things up. Most superfluous is the screenplay's attempt to firm up Gerry's alibi for the night of the bombing by placing him at a robbery that took place 10 days later. Then, too, father and son never actually shared a cell (but what a great dramatic device), and the Conlons' lawyer never got to make the blazing courtroom speech that Emma Thompson delivers at the film's climax.

The movie conveys with alarming authenticity the '70s fashions of squatters and flower children wandering over London, blithely unaware of the fate that awaited them. Daniel Day-Lewis lends it great credibility too; he tunnels into the role of Gerry and spends most of the movie in a frenzy of rage and terror that seems to capture just exactly what those 15 years must have been like. *In the Name of the Father* gets the big things right—terribly right. ◀

I N P R I N T

Trickle-up economics

By Nancy Folbre

Republicans can occasionally be both righteous and right about poverty. This is a lesson we first learned from Kevin Phillips, whose 1990 book, *The Politics of Rich and Poor*, documented the redistribution of money to the rich during the Reagan-Bush era and complained bitterly about the immiseration of the lower middle class. This new book by Peter Peterson, on the other hand, protests the aggrandizement of the upper middle class. In the process, it makes a case for increased public transfers to the poor and challenges the left's traditional understanding of the welfare state.

Peterson, an ardent deficit-cutter, resembles an upscale version of Ross Perot, with smaller ears and a better education. A self-made millionaire with policy experience in the Nixon administration and a history of criticizing Reaganomics, he has an impressive track record of publications in highbrow magazines like the *New York Review of Books* and the *Atlantic Monthly*. His new book sports endorsements by Perot, Sens. Warren Rudman and Paul Tsongas, and economists Martin Feldstein and C. Fred Bergsten. It was recently the subject of a flattering segment on *60 Minutes*.

But keep reading. Peterson argues persuasively that the affluent, not just the very rich, benefit disproportionately from government spending. Bill Clinton's definition of middle class tops out at about \$200,000 (the level at which this year's small increase in income tax rates kicks in). But as Peterson points out, a more accurate upper limit for the 50 percent of all families squarely in the middle is about \$60,000. And without increasing taxes on (or cutting benefits to) 25 percent of families that earn more than that amount it will be difficult, if not impossible, to really

help the poor.

Many leftists and liberals argue that the way to build support for anti-poverty programs is to avoid means-testing, which has a "ghettoizing" effect, and develop programs that benefit virtually all citizens. More beneficiaries mean a bigger constituency for transfer programs.

Peterson disagrees. "If everyone gets on the bandwagon," he asks, "who will be left to pull it?" He offers considerable evidence that the upper middle class has successfully turned the welfare state to its own ends. By his calculations, only about \$1 out of every \$8 of federal social spending goes to help poor families over the poverty line.

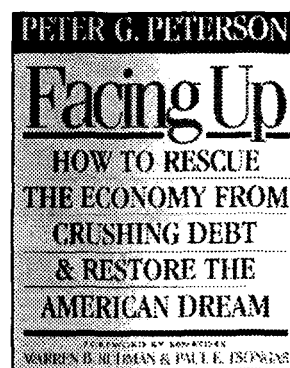
Consider the home mortgage interest that individuals can deduct from their taxable income: theoretically, the deduction applies to everyone, but of course some can take better advantage of the opportunity than others. In 1994, this deduction cost the U.S. Treasury about \$46 billion, about twice the amount spent on Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC); 80 percent of the benefits went to households with incomes over \$50,000.

Social Security and Medicare provide widespread coverage for the elderly, even those whose earnings, savings and private pensions are perfectly adequate. The distinction between so-called "entitlements" and "welfare" is largely rhetorical: most current retirees receive benefits worth between two and five times the actuarial value of their prior contributions. Simply calling Social Security an "entitlement" doesn't seem to have increased anyone's willingness to entitle children to an income over the poverty line.

In fact, new punitive workfare sanctions imposed by many states, the cutting edge of a planned federal initiative, enjoy a great deal of political support. The perceived cost and coverage of transfer programs probably exerts less influence on voters than moralistic distinctions between "deserving" and "undeserving" citizens. It is these distinctions, imbued with racist and sexist overtones, that have undermined anti-poverty efforts.

Furthermore, Clinton's commitment to preserving the prerogatives of all families earning less than \$200,000 (the bottom 99 percent) makes fiscal credibility a problem at every turn. By most accounts, the sticking point in his welfare reform program will be the funds required to provide the job training and childcare necessary to justify stricter work requirements for AFDC recipients.

Most conservatives would like to balance the budget on the backs of the poor, or, at the



Facing Up:
How to Rescue the
Economy from Crushing
Debt and Restore
the American Dream
By Peter G. Peterson
Simon and Schuster
411 pp., \$22



very least, blame them for all our social problems. Not Peterson, who insists on the need to lower the poverty rate. He proposes a number of new measures to increase transfers to the poor while cutting the deficit through steeply progressive means-testing for social benefits, a cap on the home mortgage deduction, and large gasoline, cigarette and alcohol taxes.

Sound familiar? Like Perot, Peterson appeals not to the self-interest of the middle and upper classes but to patriotic values and concern for future generations. This seems a bit naive, especially given the mounting pressures on middle-class incomes documented so clearly by Kevin Phillips. Millionaires are often fond of exhorting others to be charitable.

On the other hand, the Perot/Peterson phenomenon underscores one of the major weaknesses of liberalism: its reluctance to acknowledge that the needs of the poor cannot be met simply by taxing the richest of the rich. Deficit spending appeared, for a while, to be a means of sidestepping this dilemma. Now we know that it simply postpones it: growing public debt will almost certainly lead to higher tax rates for the middle class in the future.

The more radical response, of course, has always been to call for structural change—say, more egalitarian distribution of assets, combined with worker ownership and control. But there, too, the question is whether the middle class would gain more from the rich than it would lose to the poor. The racial, ethnic and cultural affinities of moderate affluence

make the underclass seem more threatening than the over-class.

Perhaps the left should relinquish the notion that universal benefits would create a universal interest (reminiscent of the old vision of a universal class). How, then, to create a viable coalition to fight for some minimum standards of fairness and equal opportunity?

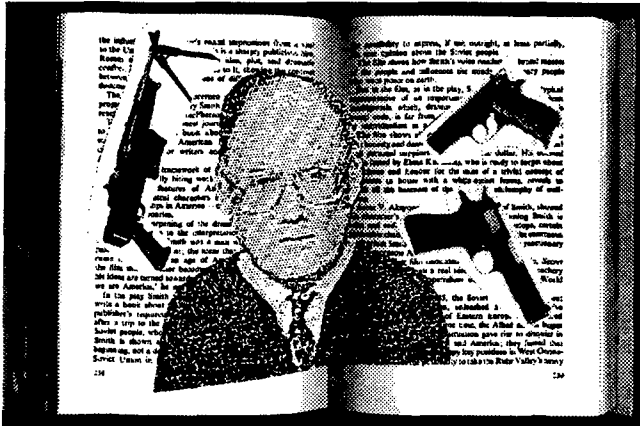
We could defend moral principles that go beyond the basic decency that Perot and Peterson invoke to include economic justice, solidarity and, yes, charity. We could contest the extreme racism visited upon the poor and the divisive impact of residential and cultural segregation.

And we could replace the distinction between “entitlements” and “welfare,” with a new focus on what activities and circumstances should entitle individuals to public support. How pathetic that, in the United States today, many families can take a bigger tax deduction for buying a house than for raising kids. How ridiculous that transfers to the affluent exceed transfers to the poor.

We might also challenge the structure of a Social Security system that pits the elderly against the young by guaranteeing the welfare of one but not the other. One could hardly ask for a better example of the way entitlements can intensify, rather than overcome, social divisions. ◀

Nancy Folbre works with the Center for Popular Economics and is the author of *Who Pays for the Kids? Gender and the Structures of Constraint* (forthcoming from Routledge).

SPEED READING



With Liberty and Justice for Some: A Critique of the Conservative Supreme Court

By David Kairys
The New Press
246 pp., \$25

For those who grew up in the era of the Warren Court, the Supreme Court seemed naturally to stand as a promoter of democratic rights, especially civil rights and liberties. For this, most Americans lauded the Court in the '50s and '60s. But right-wing critics attacked the Court relentlessly, claiming that its "judicial activism"—by which they meant applying constitutional protections to the formerly excluded—was legislation on behalf of the undeserving, and that as such it did by fiat what democratically elected representatives would (or could) not do. For leading the Court in these decisions, Chief Justice Earl Warren, appointed by President Eisenhower, was seen as a traitor to his class, and became the subject of John Birch Society billboards that dotted the South and West demanding his impeachment.

Up until then, the right had pretty much left the Court alone. And for good reason. For most of our history the courts were bastions of conservatism and staunch defenders of property rights against those of the people. Not surprisingly, therefore, its main critics were progressive or socialist democrats. In 1932, for example, the socialist lawyer and scholar Louis Boudin wrote a powerful two-volume critique of the Supreme Court called *Government by Judiciary*, in which he detailed how the Court had usurped power from the elected branches of government, always in the interest of property owners.

But shortly after Boudin's volumes appeared, the Court—under heavy pressure from New Dealers and the newly organized industrial unions of the CIO—took one of its rare liberal turns. And as the Court began upholding progressive New Deal legislation and making decisions in favor of free speech and the right of workers to organize, Boudin's book slid rapidly into obscurity.

Now, with the Court reassuming its traditional role as the bastion of conservatism, David Kairys has taken up where Boudin left off. Like Kairys' earlier book, *The Politics of Law*, his *With Liberty and Justice for Some* is both a critique of the Court as a highly political body and an argument for more democratic participation in the governance of our society. The core of the book is a compellingly lucid analysis of 31 Supreme Court decisions that have served to restrict individual liberties, to undermine democracy by protecting the power of money in elections and to subvert equal rights.

Kairys does this by telling the stories of the people involved in the cases he discusses in addition to analyzing the reasoning and the effects of the Court's decisions. He challenges the conservative ideology of "strict constructionism," which argues for a "depoliticized" judiciary that sticks closely to the law as mandated by the Constitution. But, as Kairys demonstrates conclusively, conservative claims of objectivity have been largely meaningless, since the values and politics of judges inevitably affect their rulings. And, in fact, in decision after decision, conservative justices have imposed their ideologies on the law. Thus, Justice William Rehnquist consistently ignores precedent, disregards the explicit language of the Constitution or resorts to tortuous logic to reach conclusions favorable to the corporations he favors and injurious to women workers he does not.

While Kairys focuses mostly on conservative justices and their decisions, he is also critical of decisions by liberal justices. Because the law is inherently indeterminate, because its interpretation of necessity depends on the social values of the lawyers who interpret it, Kairys suggests that we cannot rely on the courts to defend civil rights and liberties.

Too often, Kairys observes, we tend to assume that in modern times "protection of freedom, equality and democracy has been provided by the courts or not at all." But, he reminds us, many of the most important legal advances, even in the '60s and '70s, were embodied in acts of Congress. It has been the Congress that has worked to defend equality in public accommodations, voting, employment and housing; for protection of many privacy interests, including personal finances, telephone and other electronic communications and work-related polygraph tests; and to provide access to the media and government information. The only areas that have been left entirely up to the judiciary are free speech, religion and due process, all of which are assumed to be its province, and those in which the courts were performing a protective function during those decades.

Ultimately, Kairys concludes, the less the courts have to do with setting social values or determining public policy, the better. In our society the legislative branch has been clearly more accessible to the people, and most responsive to public opinion and protective of individual rights. In general, Kairys argues his case persuasively. But he fails to explain both the key decision of the Warren Court, *Brown vs. Board of Education*—which by mandating school desegre-

gation gave great impetus to the civil rights movement, and which could never have gotten passed in Congress—and *Roe vs. Wade*, which legalized abortion and which Congress also would never have passed in 1974.

Even so, Kairys' discussion of the ways in which we might realize more of the democratic promise of American life is not only well worth reading but also interesting to read.

—James Weinstein

Pictures at an Execution:

An Inquiry into the Subject of Murder

By Wendy Lesser

Harvard University Press

270 pp., \$24.95

Politicians and pundits and attorneys general may rail against the extravagant violence of *Friday the 13th* and the elegant cruelty of *NYPD Blue*. But no one thinks to question seriously our widespread fascination with murder. Our nightly local newscasts are spectacles of death and depravity, of drive-by killings, slain lovers, terrorist bombings and the like; the typical bookstore carries more murder mysteries than it does books on politics. "My delight in Hannibal Lecter, or in Anthony Hopkins's portrayal of Hannibal Lecter, and my more guarded, more disgusted and perhaps self-disgusted, but still admissible curiosity about Jeffrey Dahmer, do not set me apart as eccentric in late-twentieth century America," Wendy Lesser notes in *Pictures at an Execution*, an exploration of our curiosity about murder. "On the contrary. We all seem to be interested in murders these days. They are our truth and our fiction; they are our truth as fiction, and vice versa."

Pictures at an Execution is an original and often provocative attempt to understand why this is so. "I am interested in our interest in murder," Lesser writes. "Specifically, I am drawn to the increasingly blurry borderline between real murder and fictional murder, between murder as news and murder as art, between event and story." She centers her book around a celebrated legal case, *KQED vs. Vasquez*, in which a judge was asked to rule whether or not an execution (specifically, the execution of convicted murderer Robert Alton Harris) could be videotaped and broadcast on television. The case, as Lesser notes, raised a number of questions about the wisdom and propriety of allowing the general public to witness what was essentially a state-sponsored murder. Lesser uses the case as a springboard for a wide-ranging series of reflections on the popular interest in murders both fictional and real, attempting to answer (at least to her own satisfaction) to what extent it is proper for us "to indulge our interest in and curiosity about murder in the face of another's death."

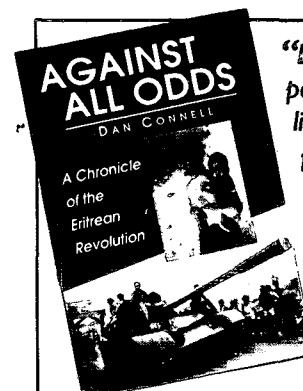
Opposed to capital punishment, Lesser is convinced that we have no more right to witness executions than we do to

carry them out in the first place, even if (as some capital punishment opponents argue) the public spectacle of execution is intended "as morally instructive theater intended to defeat execution itself." To Lesser, such "moral education" is itself immoral, regardless of whether or not it is also educational.

Lesser has chosen a fascinating subject for her book, and she writes with intelligence and a sharp wit; her topics range from Plato's ethics to the essays of Joan Didion, from the aesthetics of documentary filmmaker Frederic Wiseman to the true-crime writings of Ann Rule and Joe McGinniss. Her references range from Marxist philosopher Walter Benjamin to the *National Enquirer*.

But her book, nevertheless, is frustratingly amorphous. Lesser circles about her topics in a series of digressions and returns, but doesn't quite seem to move much beyond the initial dilemmas with which she begins the book. The book is, but is not quite, an account of the KQED courtroom drama; it is, but is not quite, a consideration of the morality of capital punishment; it is, but is not quite, an account of our society's fascination with murder and of Lesser's own fascination with true crime fiction. Lesser makes interesting observations at each point along the way. But I put the book down with far more questions than answers, as bewildered by my (and her, and our) interest in murder as when I began.

—David Futrelle



"Dan Connell's vivid eyewitness portrayal and historical study lifts the veil on a remarkable popular liberation struggle that is too little known and understood. It is an inspiring story of courage, dedication, achievement and hope, with important lessons to teach." —Noam Chomsky

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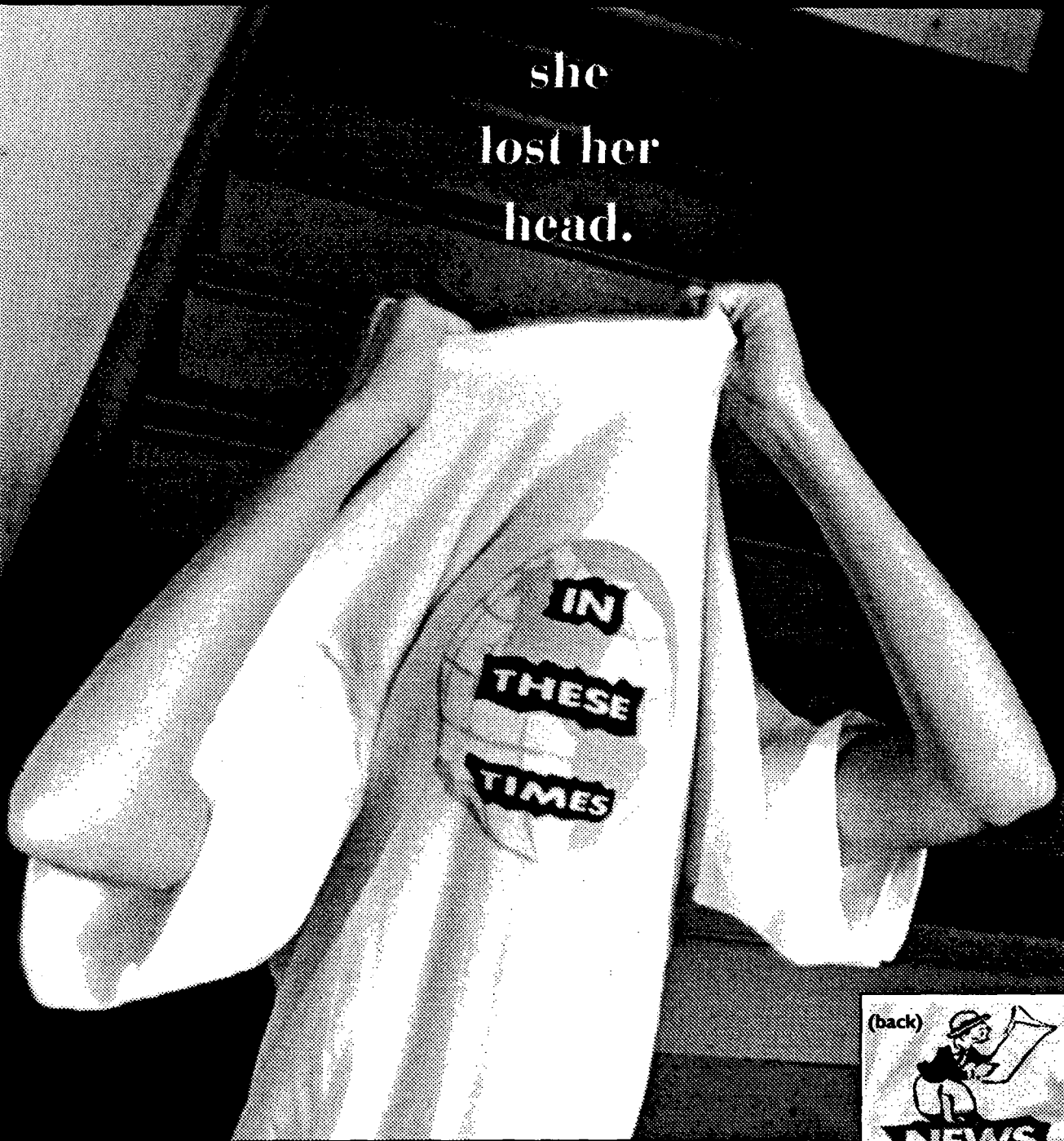
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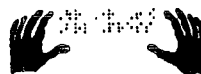
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Continued from page 40

turne. (Vera Cruz for Nancy, Big Trouble for Tonya.) You also need the wounded or dysfunctional family. (Nancy has a blind mother, who looks like an early proponent of virtual reality staring into the TV monitor; Tonya has everything else: an abusive husband, five stepfathers, George Steinbrenner as her main supporter.)

You do not apparently need to be of Japanese descent. (The 1992 Year in Review issue of *Life* showed Nancy on the cover with her arms blossoming upwards like a white flower. Kristi Yamaguchi, who actually won the gold medal, earned a passing mention on page 15.) So I realized that figure skating is like boxing, where the judges also put up funny scorecards, except that in boxing you can look like you skated on your own face. With Tonya, the hair is bad enough.

I don't always pay such close attention to current events, but I had been deprived for a week, visiting Panama on a press trip to learn about the environmental issues in the rainforests along the canal zone. We had gotten caught up in such mundane things. Food, for example. The green iguanas that crawl through the branches like squirrels have become a poacher's staple, "chicken of the trees" for their eggs and meat, so the local conservationists hope to teach nearby farmers to raise them in pens and leave the wild ones alone.

When we returned to the Hotel Grande in Panama

City, however, and flipped on the English-language news, we caught the media's grand slam of the moment inside of three minutes: the Menendez brothers, the Bobbitt penis, the knee. You don't need to go to Panama to find news, you just need to indulge your anxieties over the body's tender parts.

In the end, Nancy rules. Her story made the covers of *Time*, *Newsweek*, *People* and *Sports Illustrated* in the same week. And having started without knowing the names of any figure skaters since Peggy Fleming, I have gotten up to speed with my own strong opinion. I am—dare I say it?—a Tonya Sympathizer. The poor woman has become the media's favorite pop-therapy patient, the blue-collar bully who should have listened to her betters. Football players brag about injuring opposing quarterbacks all the time, and no one arrests them. It's just guys being guys.

But like Frank Rich of the *New York Times*, I fear that Tonya faces a future that may rise no higher than "Spud City." As he writes, "Spud City is the mall food outlet where Miss Harding, already 19 and a top figure skater, sold potatoes each afternoon to scrape up cash for her rink fees the next morning." Maybe, if she gets a break, she can open a branch in Panama among the McDonald's *hambuguesas* already spreading the wisdom of our culture to the world. ◀

Will Nixon is associate editor of *E Magazine* and a regular contributor to *In These Times*.

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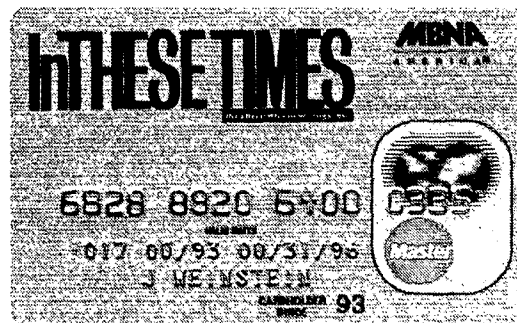
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IN THE END

De-iced

By Will Nixon

A friend of mine nearly put Nancy Kerrigan out of action just hours before the skater's rendezvous with the now-famous blunt instrument. True story. My friend is such a skating fanatic that she actually took time off work for a vacation in scenic Detroit for the national finals. There, in the lobby of the Westin Hotel, she had the good luck to cross paths with Nancy.

In so doing, my friend stepped on Nancy's foot. It was an accident, of course, though my friend felt horrible Freudian guilt, due to the fact that she's a Tonya fan. "Sorry, Nancy!" she stammered, wondering if, on some level, she really didn't mean it.

But my friend was soon upstaged by a police baton and the march of history. *Newsweek* ran a cover picture of a screaming Nancy, part Edvard Munch, part *Friday the 13th*. "Why me?" demanded the headline. As a lapsed philosophy major, I can appreciate the question. But as a sporadic sports fan, I'm mystified. Men on skates act this way all the time—it's called hockey. And New York cabbies sometimes pull out their tire irons over honking cars at a yellow light. For a gold medal, serious guys might take the approach of the cabbie who showed me his shoulder holster, then added that he carried a knife to dig out the bullets so they couldn't be traced.

But my friend patiently explained that figure skating is essentially a woman's sport. "Oprah on ice," she called it. To be a coach you need streaked hair and furs, she explained. To be a skater you need a designer cos-

Continued on page 39

